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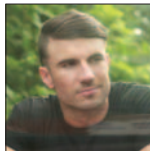
Players voice safety concerns over toll of post-virus season

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STARS AND STRIPES®

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CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK



'Challenging times are ahead'

New York makes plea for help as world virus infections top 800K

Associated Press

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo begged for health care reinforcements, saying up to 1 million more workers were needed to fight the coronavirus, as the world total climbed to more than 800,000 cases.

The plea came a day after President Donald Trump warned, "Challenging times are ahead for the next 30 days." During the Rose Garden press conference, the president said the nation should prepare for a coronavirus death toll that could exceed 100,000.

In New York, the epicenter of the American outbreak, Cuomo and health officials warned that the crisis unfolding there is just a preview of what other U.S. cities and towns will soon face. New York state's death toll climbed by more than 250 people in a day to over 1,200, most of them in the city.

"We've lost over 1,000 New Yorkers," Cuomo said. "To me, we're beyond staggering already."

New York City's Health Department recorded the city's first

SEE VIRUS ON PAGE 9

■ DOD halts announcing new cases in ranks

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■ Schools in Japan, S. Korea extend closures

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A worker moves items at a federal medical station for hospital surge capacity set up at Temple University in Philadelphia on Monday.

MATT ROURKE/AP

Aviano volunteers shop, deliver groceries to those stuck at home

By KENT HARRIS
Stars and Stripes

AVIANO AIR BASE, Italy — Senior Airman Sherraye Carter went shopping Monday at the commissary. It wasn't much different than a normal trip, she said, except that none of the items she bought were for her.

Carter, a member of the 606th Air Control Squadron, was one of the first people to participate in an on-base grocery shopping and delivery program for those whose movement is limited under Italy's sweeping coronavirus restrictions.

She picked up the items on the list she had and headed to the checkout, where the cashier called the customer and took their payment information. Then Carter delivered six or seven grocery bags to a home not far from where she lives.

"I would definitely do it again," she said. "I'm just waiting for another email."

Carter is one of more than 150 people who have volunteered to pick up and deliver groceries for those who can't go out themselves, said Senior Master Sgt.

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PACIFIC

2nd ID: Foul play not fully ruled out in 2 Humphreys deaths

By KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — The recent deaths of two American soldiers were not connected to each other or the coronavirus, but foul play has not been completely ruled out as investigations are ongoing, the military said.

The 2nd Infantry Division soldiers — Pfc. Marissa Jo Gloria and Spc. Clay Welch — died in their barracks rooms on Camp Humphreys over two consecutive days earlier this month.

Seeking to stave off speculation amid the coronavirus pandemic, officials took the unusual step of immediately announcing that neither soldier had been ill nor exhibited symptoms of COVID-19.

No cause has been released because the investigations are ongoing, but the Army Criminal Investigation Command provided new details on Monday in response to a query from Stars and Stripes.

"Initial investigation reveals these two deaths are not connected to each other and are not related to the COVID-19 virus," CID spokesman Chris Grey said in an email.

"At this point in both of the investigations, foul play is not suspected, but we have not completely ruled it out while we conduct thorough investigations," he said.

"I can also tell you there is no danger to the public or the Camp Humphreys community in regard to these deaths," he added. "No further information will be released at this time to protect the integrity of the ongoing investigations."

Gloria, 25, of Moorhead, Minn., was pronounced dead at the scene after she was found unresponsive on March 21. Welch, a combat engineer with the 2nd ID sustainment brigade and had been in South Korea since last April, according to a press release.

“There is no danger to the public or the Camp Humphreys community in regard to these deaths.”

Chris Grey
Army Criminal Investigation Command spokesman

"She entered active duty on January 22, 2019 and got her castle pinned April 2019. It was one of the proudest moments of her life," her obituary said, referring to the Army engineers' logo.



Gloria



Welch

vision, which began a nine-month rotation with 2nd ID in South Korea last month.

"Clay's death affects every member in our unit. We are all deeply saddened by the loss," said his battalion commander, Lt. Col. James Armstrong.

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Okinawa-based AAFES employee is accused of damaging parked vehicle

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — An Okinawa-based employee of the Army and Air Force Exchange Service was arrested by Japanese police March 24 after he reportedly broke the side mirror of a parked vehicle while intoxicated.

Dustin Grand Johnson, 30, was taken into custody shortly after the incident was observed in the Aragusuku neighborhood of Ginowan city at approximately 12:25 a.m., a Ginowan police

spokesman said.

"The suspect was heavily intoxicated and could not talk when police officers arrested him at site," said the spokesman, speaking on a customary condition of anonymity in line with government rules.

Police referred a charge of property damage to the Naha District Public Prosecutors Office on March 25, the spokesman said. Johnson was still in custody at the Ginowan police station Monday.

news@stripes.com

Negotiator: US, S. Korea close on cost-sharing deal

By KIM GAMEL
AND YO KYONG CHANG
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — The United States and South Korea are close on reaching a defense cost-sharing deal, a negotiator said Tuesday in Seoul on the eve of American military plans to put half of its local work force on unpaid leave.

U.S. Forces Korea was able to keep about 4,500 South Korean employees determined to be essential for maintaining "life, health, safety and minimum readiness." But the others will be furloughed beginning Wednesday after the two sides failed in seven rounds of talks to reach a new Special Measures Agreement to replace the one that expired at the end of the year.

Jeong Eun-bo, South Korea's lead negotiator, expressed regret that the U.S. was going forward with the furlough after the State Department rejected Seoul's proposal to reach a separate labor agreement.

"South Korea and the U.S. are in the last stages for sealing a deal and have continued to hold close discussions even after the seventh round of talks in mid-March," he told reporters on Tuesday evening. "We call on the U.S. side to take measures to return the Korean USFK employees facing a furlough to their workplaces as soon as possible," he said.

USFK had been paying the salaries with programmed funds since the previous deal expired,

but that money was due to run out Tuesday. The Defense Department said it will continue additional funding to support "critical" logistics cost-sharing contracts and other key positions.

Gen. Robert Abrams, the USFK commander, told Stars and Stripes that he had secured approval to keep more people due to complications from the coronavirus pandemic.

U.S. service members also will fill in for some of the vacated positions, he said Friday during an interview. He wouldn't say how many and acknowledged the troops would have a learning curve in their new roles.

Abrams said it was "heart-breaking" to have to put so many people on unpaid leave.

"A lot of these people, they're the breadwinner for their family and their extended family. It's just really hard, and it's an unfortunate situation," he said Friday in an interview at his office on Camp Humphreys.

The "litmus test" will be if the furlough is still on when a Pentagon order barring moves to prevent coronavirus spread is lifted, creating a backlog of people trying to move on and off the peninsula, Abrams said.

"I was able to go back to the department and in light of COVID-19 to secure some additional authorizations so we've included that," Abrams said.

"On the life, health, safety and minimum readiness we'll be OK in the short term," he said. "I'll be watching closely the impact

on readiness and our ability to deliver services at an acceptable level."

The issue doesn't affect non-appropriated fund organizations such as on-base restaurants, exchange stores, bowling alleys and other community activities that receive money from other sources.

Military officials also have said previously that the mitigating measures would ensure "limited to no observable reactions" for the hospital on Camp Humphreys and other medical facilities, law enforcement, commissaries, schools and post offices.

However, people could expect increased wait times, modified hours and other delays in bus services, non-emergency maintenance work orders, installation access IDs and other administrative needs.

The South has helped support U.S. troops under the Special Measures Agreement since 1991, with most of the funds used for more than 9,000 South Korean employees, logistical support and construction projects.

President Donald Trump's administration has demanded that Seoul sharply increase its contribution for offsetting the cost of some 28,500 troops stationed on the peninsula because of the threat from North Korea.

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Japanese destroyer damaged in collision with fishing vessel in the East China Sea

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — A Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force destroyer, the JS Shimakaze, was damaged Monday after colliding with a Chinese fishing vessel in the East China Sea.

The incident occurred at 8:28 p.m. approximately 400 miles west of Yakushima Island, a Joint Staff spokesman said Tuesday. Yakushima is part of Kagoshima prefecture, and is about 40 miles south of Kyushu.

Japanese officials declined to release details on what caused the incident pending a joint investigation with its coast guard.

One of the 13 Chinese sailors aboard the fishing boat complained of minor back pain after the incident; none of the Shimakaze's 260 sailors was injured, the spokesman said.

Some government spokespersons in Japan customarily speak



Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force

The Japanese destroyer JS Shimakaze, above, reportedly collided with a Chinese fishing vessel in the East China Sea on Monday.

to reporters under the condition of anonymity.

The collision left a 3-foot by 6-inch hole in the Shimakaze's port side, but the vessel was still operable, the spokesman said. Damage to the fishing vessel is unknown, but it was left operable as well.

The Shimakaze is homeported at Sasebo Naval Base in Kyushu,

which is also home to a sizable U.S. Navy contingent.

China has taken a more aggressive maritime posture in recent years as it seeks resources to fuel its rise as a global economic and military power.

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WAR ON TERRORISM

Ex-detainees play key role in Taliban deal

By MISSY RYAN
AND HAQ NAWAZ KHAN
The Washington Post

As American negotiators raced to clinch last month's landmark deal with the Taliban, several shadowy figures played a surprising but significant role: former Guantanamo Bay detainees whose release in a 2014 prisoner exchange sparked a partisan firestorm.

The so-called Taliban Five, a group of high-level militant inmates traded for an American during the Obama administration, worked behind the scenes to build support for the agreement, current and former U.S. and Taliban officials say.

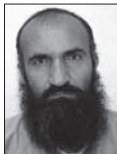
Several of the men wielded their clout, as prominent figures from the Taliban's pre-9/11 government and longtime prisoners of the United States, to push months of fractious negotiations toward a deal. One of them, a

fearsome former commander accused in the deaths of religious minorities in Afghanistan, traveled at least twice to Pakistan to generate buy-in among skeptical militant commanders, the officials said.

The Trump administration heralded the Feb. 29 agreement as a milestone toward ending nearly two decades of war, but expected talks among feuding Afghan parties have not materialized amid disagreements over initial steps and political disarray in Kabul.

In a bid to keep the process on track, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo met with Afghan leaders in Kabul last week but also with the top Taliban negotiator in Doha, an illustration of an evolving political calculus that includes engaging a group responsible for thousands of American deaths.

The Obama administration's decision in 2014 to free the five militants in exchange for Bowe Bergdahl, a U.S. soldier held captive by the Taliban for five years, was met with scathing criticism from Republicans including Pompeo, then a congressman



Khairkhwa



Fazl



Noori



Wasiq



Omari

and a member of the House Intelligence Committee, Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., and Donald Trump.

After a dozen years at Guantanamo, the Taliban detainees were sent to Doha with their families, where they were barred from traveling for one year and placed under U.S. and Qatari surveillance.

In 2015, then-candidate Trump criticized the prisoner swap, calling Bergdahl a "no good, rotten traitor" and characterizing the released Taliban members as "five killers" who were now "back on the battlefield." Pompeo said he had seen no proof that the men were reformed and would not "return to trying to do harm to America," Graham called them "the hardest of the hard core."

"They have American blood on their hands and surely as night follows day they will return to the fight," Graham wrote in a 2014 letter to leaders of the Senate Armed Services Committee. "In effect, we released the 'Taliban Dream Team.'"

The blowback to the trade, which included contentious congressional appearances and was reminiscent of the aftermath of the attacks on U.S. personnel in Benghazi, Libya, effectively shut down attempts to reach a peace deal during the Obama administration.

The controversy "tamped down the possibility of doing the things that actually could have led to further progress," said Jarrett Blanc, a former State Department official who worked on the transfer.

The defense secretary at the time, Chuck Hagel, who signed the Taliban Five's release order, said he and other senior officials weighed the risks of freeing the men against the chance to free Bergdahl, whose condition was believed to be deteriorating.

Bergdahl was captured after walking off his remote base in southeast Afghanistan in 2009 under murky circumstances. After being taken across the border to Pakistan, he was held by the Haqqani network, a hard-line Taliban faction. He was chained to a bed or locked in a cage for long stretches, and his mental and physical health suffered.

After his release, he pleaded guilty to desertion and misbehavior before a military court and was dishonorably discharged.

Hagel, in an interview, said the men were not among the most radical at Guantanamo but acknowledged that officials were not able to guarantee they would not conduct or incite violence against the United States. "Knowing like you always do that there's never any certainty, we tried to get as many assurances as we could," he said.

After the exchange, the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office found the operation violated the law because the Obama administration had not notified Congress ahead of time.

In 2015, news reports suggested the former prisoners had attempted to "reengage" with militant activity by communicating with extremist networks, an assertion the Obama administration denied.

The same men, now members of the Taliban's negotiating committee, were present when Pompeo attended a signing ceremony in Qatar to herald the U.S.-Taliban deal, which included a temporary reduction in violence and a timeline for withdrawing U.S. troops in exchange for a Taliban promise to embrace Afghan political talks.

The former prisoners, some of whom were captured in 2001 after attempting to surrender, include Khairullah Said Wali Khairkhwa, a multilingual for-

mer Taliban provincial governor and Mohammad Fazl, the former military commander accused of crimes against Afghanistan's Shiite Hazara minority.

Despite U.S. intelligence descriptions of the men as formidable threats, some Afghans earlier in the war saw them as potent potential intermediaries. In 2011, then-President Hamid Karzai requested that Khairkhwa be released, U.S. authorities declined.

Tahir Khan, a Pakistani journalist who tracks the Afghan Taliban, said the group's decision last year to incorporate the men into its political committee in Doha was "a timely and calculated step" as it scrambled to ensure compliance across a vast and sometimes fractious insurgent organization.

Not only did the Taliban Five have the credentials of former senior leaders, Khan said, they also "have the trust of the foot soldiers."

A senior Taliban official said the men had made "great sacrifices" for the movement and were "trusted friends" of its founder, Mohammad Omar.

A spokesman for the Taliban's political office in Doha did not respond to queries on the subject. But a second Taliban official said the movement's effort to resolve the conflict gained energy after Khairkhwa, Fazl and, most importantly, Abdul Ghani Baradar arrived in Doha.

Baradar, the official whom Pompeo met with in Qatar last week, was a Taliban co-founder in the 1990s.

He was arrested in Pakistan and released in 2018.

Current and former officials described Khairkhwa and another ex-prisoner, a former Taliban government communications chief named Mohammed Nabi Omari, as active participants in months of negotiations with a

team led by Trump's Afghanistan envoy, Zalmay Khalilzad.

"Some 'hard-liners' in our ranks were not ready to enter into direct talks with the invading forces and wanted to continue their fight until the last," the official said. "But when these top five leaders were released and joined the political office, those commanders also agreed to have a peace deal."

The group also includes Abdul Haq Wasiq, a former Taliban intelligence official, and Norullah Noori, a former governor.

Officials said Fazl made at least two recent trips to Pakistan, in October and December, the first known times any member of the group has traveled outside Qatar since their arrival.

In October, Fazl met with members of the Quetta Shura, a Taliban advisory council, according to a third Taliban official. At the time, the militants were scrambling to regroup after the death of a U.S. soldier in an attack prompted Trump to abruptly cancel a planned summit at Camp David to sign a deal they supported.

"That was a crucial time," the official said.

During his second visit to Pakistan, Fazl made the case to Taliban commanders for a proposed seven-day "reduction in violence" period, which U.S. negotiators demanded after the Camp David breakdown but some hard-line militants opposed.

When the two sides later announced the start to the weeklong period, Fazl spoke with military commanders on the phone in an attempt to ensure compliance, officials said.

If the next phase of talks do begin, it is likely that the Taliban Five will be at the table attempting to negotiate a settlement that could bring the movement into Afghanistan's political process. It is unclear what impact the COVID-19 crisis, now posing a serious challenge to the country's health infrastructure, will have on the planned negotiations.

On Saturday, a Taliban spokesman said the group would not begin talks with a 21-member negotiating team announced by the government because the militants did not believe it was sufficiently representative of the Afghan populace.

Taliban team arrives in Kabul to monitor prisoner release

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — A three-member Taliban technical team arrived Tuesday in the Afghan capital to monitor the release of their prisoners as part of a peace deal signed by the Taliban and the U.S., a spokesman for the insurgent group said.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid confirmed the team's arrival in a tweet. It marked the first time a Taliban delegation has been in Kabul since the group was driven out by the U.S.-led coalition in November 2001.

There was no immediate comment from the Afghan government on the team's arrival.

On Monday, Jawed Faisal, spokesman for the Afghan National Security Adviser's office, said Afghan officials and the Taliban agreed during a video conference that the insurgent group should send a technical team to Kabul for face-to-face discussions on the release of Taliban prisoners. The International Committee of the Red Cross agreed to assist the team in getting to Kabul.

The prisoner release is part of a peace

deal signed last month by the Taliban and U.S. that calls for the government's release of 5,000 Taliban and the Taliban's release of 1,000 government personnel and Afghan troops.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and political opponent Abdullah Abdullah both declared themselves president in a parallel inauguration ceremony last month. They have been locked in a power struggle and the discord has prompted Washington to say it would cut \$1 billion in assistance to Afghanistan if the two can't work out their differences.

Afghanistan's political turmoil and the rivalry between Ghani and Abdullah have impeded each step of talks with the Taliban. Tensions between the Taliban and the government are supposed to come next under the peace agreement.

The peace deal calls for the eventual withdrawal of all 13,000 U.S. soldiers from Afghanistan in exchange for guarantees from the Taliban that they will fight other militant groups, including the Islamic State group. The deal has been touted as Afghanistan's best chance yet for ending its relentless wars.

VIRUS OUTBREAK



LA SHAWNA CUSTOM/U.S. Army

A soldier from the 11th Air Defense Artillery Brigade dead lifts during an Army Combat Fitness Test Jan. 27 at Fort Bliss, Texas. The Army is postponing transition to the ACFT over virus concerns.

Restraints force Army to halt ACFT transition

By IMMANUEL JOHNSON
Stars and Stripes

The Army has halted its long-planned transition to the Army Combat Fitness Test, after on-base gym closures made it difficult for many soldiers to train with the strength equipment the test requires.

The ACFT, which was set to begin in October, includes dead lifts, a standing power throw, pushups, the sprint-drag-carry, leg tuck and a two-mile run.

The new test will be "suspended until further notice" following gym closures and social distancing restrictions put in place because of the coronavirus, Army spokeswoman Lt. Col. Robin Ochao told Military.com.

Army officials were not immediately available for comment Tuesday.

The Army Physical Fitness Test, first introduced in 1980, will remain the service's primary assessment for now. Leaders have long said that the test, which includes two minutes of pushups,

two minutes of situps and a two-mile run, has failed to adequately predict which soldiers could accomplish physical tasks necessary in war.

The Army began field-testing the ACFT in late 2018 and introduced standards about a year later. In late January, the service began distributing ACFT gear to more than 1 million active duty, Reserve and National Guard soldiers, a Jan. 22 Army memo said.

Some soldiers said the equipment rollout left little time to train to the new standards and to get familiar with the equipment, which includes kettlebells, medicine balls, pullup bars, a dead lift bar, weights and an exercise sled. Sgt. Awad Mohamed, a senior human resource sergeant with the 82nd Airborne Division in Fort Bragg, N.C., welcomed the ACFT's delay.

"Finally, the Army is using commonsense," he said in an online chat Tuesday. "Some soldiers barely got instructions on how the test will be."

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NJ National Guard member is first virus death in military

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

A member of the New Jersey National Guard died Saturday after a weeklong battle with the coronavirus, service officials announced Monday. He is the first service member to die from the virus.

Army Capt. Douglas Lynn Hickok was a drilling Dragoon and physician's assistant originally from Jackson, New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy said Monday in a news conference. Though Hickok was a member of the New Jersey National Guard, the father of four resided in Pennsylvania and died at a hospital there, Murphy said.

"Today is a sad day for the Department of Defense as we have lost our first American service member — active, Reserve or Guard — to coronavirus," Defense Secretary Mark Esper said in a statement. "... The news of this loss strengthens our resolve to work ever more closely with our interagency partners to stop the spread of [coronavirus]."

Information provided from the Defense Department and the governor did not state Hickok's age or whether he was activated with the National Guard at the time he contracted the virus.

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Pentagon orders installations to stop reporting virus cases

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Defense Department has ordered commanders at all of its installations worldwide to stop announcing new coronavirus cases among their personnel, as the Pentagon said Monday that more than 1,000 U.S. military-linked people had been sickened by the virus.

The order issued by Defense Secretary Mark Esper on Friday is meant to protect operational security at the Defense Department's global installations, Jonathan Hoffman, the Pentagon's chief spokesman, said in a statement Monday. He said Defense Department leaders worried adversaries could exploit such information, especially if the data showed the outbreak impacted U.S. nuclear forces or other critical units.

"Unit level readiness data for key military forces is information that is classified as a risk to operational security and could jeopardize operations and/or deterrence," Hoffman said in the statement. "If a commander believes that [the coronavirus] could affect the readiness of our strategic deterrent or strategic response forces, we understandably protect that information from public release and falling into the hands of our adversaries — as we expect they would do the same."

He pledged the Pentagon would continue to release near-daily updates of total cases among troops, DOD civilian workers, military dependents and defense contractors, which officials with Esper's public affairs office have done for nearly three weeks. Those numbers have grown steadily with each release.

As of Monday morning, the Pentagon reported 633 service members were among 1,087 total cases within the Defense Department community. Among those troops, 64 had recovered by Monday, while 26 were hospitalized. The latest data shows a dramatic increase in cases among troops since Friday, when the Pentagon reported 343 cases among service members.

The individual military services remain authorized to report coronavirus cases within their ranks to the public, Hoffman

'Unit level readiness data for key military forces is information that is classified as a risk to operational security and could jeopardize operations and/or deterrence.'

Jonathan Hoffman
Pentagon spokesman

said.

"While services will not release the numbers of cases at each base, we will continue to work closely with the local communities to ensure the health and well-being of all," he said. "Individual installations [and] commands will continue to work closely with their respective community's health agencies on reporting, as ultimately our bases are part of a larger civilian community."

The policy change came after Esper hinted last week during an interview with the Reuters news agency that he would soon begin withholding "disaggregated numbers" related to the virus. But the defense secretary did not specify what information would be withheld, Reuters reported.

On Sunday, Army officials in Stuttgart, Germany, announced they could no longer provide the public updated information about cases in their local area. At that time, Stuttgart, which houses headquarters for U.S. European Command and U.S. Africa Command, had reported at least 80 infections among its personnel.

Meanwhile, officials at Camp Humphreys in South Korea on Monday confirmed a fifth case of the virus among personnel assigned to that base, the largest U.S. base in that country. It was not immediately clear why that information was released to the public given the new policy.

Defense officials at several stateside military posts confirmed Monday that they had been issued the order to stop providing data about their cases. Several of these officials raised concerns that the new ban on local data could harm their ability to inform their own force and strain their ability to work with officials in their surrounding civilian communities amid the pandemic. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to speak about the policy.

"We'll have to work through it,"

one of the officials said. "People are not going to be happy. I don't think they're going to understand this."

Individual installations had been providing the number of cases via official news releases, statements on their websites and largely through social media, including hosting virtual town hall events, in which top commanders provided updates on the conditions on their bases and answered questions from the public.

Hoffman said the Defense Department would not conceal information about coronavirus-related deaths on its installations and would work to keep local officials abreast of any "health threats" coming from military bases.

"We appreciate our citizens understanding as we protect operational security and our nation's readiness," he said.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Veterans groups go virtual to better connect

By J.P. LAWRENCE
Stars and Stripes

James Martin logged in last week to what he hopes can grow into a regular meeting space for other veterans adjusting to life under a pandemic: online video game night.

Martin is a volunteer for the Wounded Warrior Project, which like other veteran service organizations is trying to find ways to reach and connect veterans at a time when most can't meet up in person, due to social distancing guidelines meant to contain the spread of the coronavirus.

Martin, a former Marine injured during combat in Afghanistan in 2013, said he is helping WWP in its effort to build a veteran online gaming community.

"Even though we're locked in the house, you can still be connected, you can still meet other warriors," Martin said. "We can play video games together and check on each other."

Each night, the 39-year-old logs in from his home just outside Pittsburgh into a forum recently created by WWP on the site Discord. There, veterans and gamers can chat and find others to play games with. The forum brings together veterans from all over the country, and Martin said the discussion is not just fun and games — it's also about untangling the stresses of life as they play.

In one gaming session Thursday night, Martin and a few other

veterans shared their frustrations with self-quarantining. One had a wife who needed a COVID-19 test. Another was struggling with his college classes after they moved online.

A friend of Martin's, Gabriel Beltrés, also a wounded veteran with WWP, lightened he mood with a pregame speech:

"Listen up, today hasn't been a good day, but it's gonna turn into a good day. We are going to be happy, we are going to be good, because gaming is supposed to be fun," Beltrés said.

The WWP's virtual gaming nights and fitness lessons began over the last few weeks for veterans, "just to give them a place to hang out during a crazy time," said Matt Twigg, livestreaming and gaming specialist for the organization.

Other veteran service organizations, known for hosting pancake breakfasts and group workouts, are now organizing conference calls and virtual meetups.

Team Red, White and Blue rolled out an online fitness challenge for its members to do at home, with groups of veterans doing bodyweight exercises in a tournament styled on college basketball's March Madness.

The American Legion is connecting members through their phones. Using party line conference calls allows the inclusion of older veterans who may not be comfortable with social media, said Jennifer Havlick, member



James Martin

James Martin, a Marine veteran of Iraq and Afghanistan, shows off his gaming setup in February at his home just outside of Pittsburgh. Martin, a volunteer for the Wounded Warrior Project, hopes to connect veterans during the coronavirus pandemic through video games.

of American Legion Post 109 in northern Minnesota.

"For those who don't use Facebook, it's the greatest thing, they all know how to talk on the phone," said Havlick, an Army veteran and originator of "enhanced buddy checks," in which veterans call older veterans and ask if they need help buying groceries or doing chores.

Veterans of Foreign Wars, which has been around for more than 100 years, is encouraging its members to reach out to each other via Skype and other video call services.

VFW Post 5066 in Collierville, Tenn., will be using the app Zoom to conduct its elections and broadcast a concert.

Its post commander, Justin Johnson, said he hopes telecon-

ferencing becomes a permanent feature of VFW life. "Long-term, I think this will benefit this post, because now it allows members that couldn't really make it to meetings to attend," he said.

It's important for veterans to stay connected, said Timothy Byrne, a retired Army lieutenant colonel and a peer mentor for WWP. Prior to the coronavirus pandemic, Byrne would always encourage veterans, especially those who have just left the military or are suffering from post-traumatic stress, to leave the house and interact with other people.

"When we self-isolate, we get into our own shells, think about stuff too much," Byrne said on the phone from his home in Salem, Mass.

Now, self-quarantining has deepened the feeling of isolation some veterans already have, he said. One of the veterans he's mentoring is suffering through a recent divorce, has lost his routine and shared thoughts of suicide.

"After me talking to him, spending some time, he said, 'I went and got help,'" Byrne said.

Keeping in touch with fellow veterans, even it's not in person but over the phone or online, can save lives, he said.

"We do these virtual things, and we still get that social contact with people," Byrne said. "I don't know what we'd do without it."

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Delivery: 'I tried to put myself in someone else's shoes,' airman says of help

FROM FRONT PAGE

Joseph Finney, who helped start the program, called Wish List for Wyverns, after the Italian government placed strict limits on people's movements to try to curb the spread of the coronavirus.

Italy has the highest mortality rate from the coronavirus in the world, at 11%, according to data posted on the health ministry's website. Of 101,739 people who had tested positive for the virus in Italy as of Monday, nearly 11,600 have died, the data show. Everyone in the country has been ordered to stay home unless they're traveling to work, buying groceries or other essential items, or seeking medical care. Only one adult per family is supposed to take care of those tasks, the rules say.

Those doing the shopping and making deliveries for Wish List for Wyverns carry special memos issued by the base to prove they are providing an essential service and are authorized to be outside of their home, said Finney, also a member of the 606th.

Volunteer shoppers vastly outnumber

the handful of home-bound customers who have signed up for the program so far, Finney said.

But with numerous categories of people eligible to apply for help through the program — people with kids and deployed spouses, those in isolation or quarantine, retirees, single parents, and those whose spouses work extended hours — the numbers turning to the program for help are expected to grow, he said.

The most complicated thing about Wish List for Wyverns may be finding where to sign up online. People who need someone else to shop for them should contact their chain of command, who will give them instructions on how to use the program.

Carter said her first trip went smoothly and that she was happy to help.

"I tried to put myself in someone else's shoes," she said. "If I were in that situation ... I'd want someone to help me."

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ENRICA A. WOOLVER/US Air Force

Air Force Senior Airman Sherraye Carter bags green onions at the commissary on Aviano Air Base, Italy, on Monday. Carter is one of more than 150 people who have volunteered to pick up and deliver groceries for those who can't go out themselves because of Italy's limits on people's movements to curb the spread of the coronavirus.

MILITARY

Marines stop recruits from going to SC boot camp

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A coronavirus outbreak at Parris Island has forced the service to temporarily stop new Marine recruits from heading there for boot camp.

The increase in illnesses at the base happened over the weekend, according to Capt. Bryan McDonnell, a spokesman for Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C. The uptick in cases comes after acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly announced last week that two Marine recruits tested positive at Parris Island.

Base officials conducted an investigation and isolated everyone who was in contact with the two Marines, McDonnell said. Additionally, two other Marines stationed at the base have tested positive for the virus, though they work separately from recruit training.

McDonnell said that the outbreak was less than 50 people, though he would not provide a specific number due to a new Pentagon directive that prevents military installations from individually reporting the number of coronavirus cases at their bases.

McDonnell said that the base was prepared to deal with the

coronavirus cases due to screening measures put in place for recruits and the contact tracing of people who have tested positive for the virus.

The coronavirus cases are “localized and contained,” he said.

The suspension on shipping new recruits is a precautionary measure intended to protect more recruits, the training personnel and the installation community from the virus, according to a Marine Corps statement Monday.

“The preservation of our Marines, recruits and their families is the highest priority for Marine Corps recruiting during this national emergency,” Gen. David Berger, the commandant of the Marine Corps, said in the prepared statement. “With that in mind, we’ve paused this week’s shipping of new recruits to Parris Island and will revise our overall shipping plan to ensure we are able to meet the nation’s needs while protecting its next generation of Marines.”

The statement did not say how many new recruits would be affected by the temporary suspension. Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island is one of two locations for training new recruits, with the other at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego



MICHELLE BRUDNICKI/U.S. Marine Corps

Recruits with Hotel Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, eat afternoon chow aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., on Thursday.

in California.

McDonnell said that the base is planning to have a 14-day isolation period before recruits begin their training once recruit arrivals resume.

He could not give a date for when recruit arrivals would

begin again, other than to say it was “conditions based.”

Recruits now at Parris Island will continue their training “with continued emphasis on personal and environmental cleanliness and social distancing,” according to the Marine Corps.

The statement tells new recruits to contact their recruiters to make certain that they understand changes to their shipping dates.

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Four Air Force recruits have contracted coronavirus

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Air Force halted sending new recruits to basic training this week in an effort to ensure safety for trainees and instructors amid the coronavirus pandemic, which has sickened four people in the service’s initial training program, officials said Monday.

The pause is only expected to last one week and will allow the service to clean facilities and rest its instruction cadre at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Air Force Base in Texas, said Col. Jeffrey McLemore, the vice commander of the Air Force Recruiting Service. The halt comes as the service plans to open a second site for basic training temporarily to allow trainees more physical space to follow social distancing policies meant to slow the virus’

spread.

Air Force Maj. Gen. John DeGoes, the commander of the 59th Medical Wing in San Antonio, described the four cases as isolated events that did not appear to threaten others at Lackland. The infected recruits have been isolated from others and are experiencing only minor symptoms, he said.

Three of the recruits appear to have contracted the disease before shipping to basic training. The fourth individual likely contracted the disease from one of the others — the first individual to test positive March 18 for the virus — while traveling to basic training together, DeGoes told reporters Monday. Last month, the Air Force instituted a movement restriction policy for new recruits, in which 40-person groups flew to Lackland together and have been segregated from

other individuals for their first two weeks at the base in an effort to limit the spread of the disease.

Service officials have said that continuing to train recruits is essential for the Air Force to complete its global missions. Maj. Gen. Andrea Tulos, the commander of 2nd Air Force, said that the service must strike a “delicate balance” in training new airmen and helping stop the fast-spreading virus, which the Pentagon said Monday has infected more than 1,000 members of the Defense Department community.

“Quite simply, it’s because we are our nation’s 9-1-1,” Tulos said Monday. “When the nation needs us, we answer the call ... [and] we have a responsibility to be able to continue to generate the forces for our nation to win the fight.”

To date, all four military services with Pentagon-controlled training have reported recruits

who have tested positive for the virus. The services have continued their initial entrance training programs, though some of them have made adjustments. The Army, for example, has shipped about 50% fewer recruits than normal to basic combat training. And the Marine Corps on Monday announced that it would pause sending recruits to its legendary Parris Island Recruit Depot in South Carolina for at least one week.

Like the Army, the Air Force is sending fewer recruits to basic training amid the deepening crisis. But the service also elected to send a class of 60 recruits to Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., for a shortened basic training class at the base on the state’s coast.

Those recruits will arrive at Keesler on April 7 and conduct basic training in six weeks. Air Force basic typically lasts 8.5

weeks. Tulos said that recruits who train at Keesler will receive the same instruction as ones at Lackland at a slightly quicker pace.

“The airmen we produce at Keesler will meet the same ... training objectives as the airmen that we produce at Lackland,” she said. “At the end of the day, the airman that comes out and marches across the parade field [at Keesler] is going to be the same quality airman we deliver to our commanders.”

The initial 60 recruits will be the only class sent to Keesler until they complete training, Tulos said. Service officials will study the class as it moves through training and decide later whether additional classes will be sent to Keesler for basic training.

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First virus case at Navy basic training postpones new recruits’ arrival

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Navy has rescheduled sending new recruits to basic training after the service’s Recruit Training Command Great Lakes, Ill., announced its first positive case Sunday.

A recruit tested positive Saturday and is being treated at the Captain James A. Lovell Federal

Health Care Center in Chicago, the command announced on its official Facebook page.

“Given the positive case this past weekend, and as we conduct thorough contact tracing and further testing, out of an abundance of caution we have rescheduled the shipping of new recruits planned for this week in order to further assess the situation and enhance our mitigation measures,” Cmdr. Dave Hecht, a spokesman for the

chief of naval personnel, said in a statement.

People who had been in close contact with the recruit are being notified and areas, including the barracks, are being thoroughly cleaned, according to the social media post.

New recruits have been rescheduled to arrive next week in order to give the command time to do a contact investigation and clean the barracks, according to a

Navy official.

Recruit Training Command Great Lakes, the only basic training installation for the Navy, started restricting movement for 14 days on March 26 for incoming recruits prior to beginning their training. The policy requires them to practice social distancing. The recruit who tested positive arrived a week prior to the start of the new policy, according to the Facebook post.

Before arriving at basic training, new recruits are asked health screening questions about the virus and have their body temperatures checked. Most of the active-duty staff and instructors at the command have been moved onto the base for at least 30 days in order to reduce the spread of the virus, Hecht said.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

DODGE schools in Japan, South Korea to extend closures

By DAVE ORNAUER
Stars and Stripes

URUMA, Okinawa — Defense Department schools in Japan and South Korea will remain closed beyond spring break and virtual instructions will continue “until further notice” due to ongoing coronavirus concerns, school officials announced Tuesday.

“Due to the current health protection conditions in our communities, we will not be able to resume our normal operations on April 13,” said Lois Rapp, director of the Department of Defense Education Activity Pacific, wrote in a letter Tuesday.

The goal remains for students to meet required standards to move on to their next grade level “and for seniors to graduate as scheduled, whether that accomplishment is celebrated in person or virtually,” Rapp wrote.

DODGE schools in South Korea will also remain closed through spring break, and DODGE-Pacific officials will “continue to monitor the environment in coordination with U.S. Forces Korea,” DODGE-Pacific spokeswoman Miranda Ferguson told Stars and

Stripes on Tuesday.

“Decisions regarding the re-opening of schools will be made on a weekly basis and communicated with families,” she said.

“The health and safety of our students and staff is always our priority,” she added.

DODGE schools in Japan, including Okinawa, had been open through most of March but shut their doors March 23 with online instruction beginning March 25.

The announcement came as the number of coronavirus cases on U.S. bases in Japan and South Korea have increased.

U.S. Forces Korea reported its 14th confirmed case Tuesday. The outbreak in South Korea began in Daegu and has spread, with 9,661 cases confirmed as of Monday.

Bases in Japan have also seen several positive cases, including three sailors, two airmen and an Army dependent.

DODGE officials will continue to work closely with military officials to monitor the situation, Rapp’s letter said.

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Marines delay deployment of 2,500 troops to Australia

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

The Marine Corps is delaying the deployment of thousands of Marines to northern Australia for a six-month rotation starting in April due to travel restrictions associated with the coronavirus, U.S. officials said Monday.

The Marines had planned to push ahead with the mission, known as Marine Rotational Force-Darwin, by isolating troops in their barracks during their first 14 days Down Under.

However, Defense Secretary Mark Esper issued orders last week barring nearly all official movement overseas for official movement overseas for official movement overseas.

“In cooperation with the Australian government, the MRF-D 2020 rotation is delayed at this time due to concerns over COVID-19, and we agree that force protection must be a top priority for both countries as we continue to fight the virus,” Marine Corps Forces Pacific commander Lt. Gen. Lewis Cragg said in a statement Monday.

The U.S. remains committed to its defense treaty with Australia, he said.

The deployment was to have involved 2,500 Marines. Some elements arrived in Darwin in

March, Australian officials said in an email Friday.

“All members of these elements have conformed with Australian Government and Northern Territory protocols in place at the time of their arrival, including 14 days in quarantine on Defence premises, away from the public,” the Australian Department of Defence officials said.

Before they departed the U.S., the Marines were subject to a range of medical precautions, including daily temperature checks over four days prior to departure and pre-deployment medical screening, the officials said.

The Marine Corps said it is prepared to conduct the deployment later this year if the situation permits, keeping within health and force protection concerns. The changes to this year’s deployment do not change the plans for those in subsequent years, the Marines’ statement said.

Scheduled transfer of equipment and supplies will still take place to ensure that future rotations are supported. No personnel will accompany the supply transfers and all equipment and supplies will comply with Australian quarantine and inspection requirements, the statement said.

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MANDY FOSTER/U.S. Air Force

Members of the 18th Medical Group test for coronavirus at Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, on March 20. A family member visiting an airman who tested positive for coronavirus also has the disease.

Visiting relative of Okinawa-based airman also tests positive for virus

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — A family member visiting an Okinawa-based airman who tested positive for coronavirus over the weekend also has the disease, the Air Force announced Tuesday.

The family member’s movements have been restricted since medical personnel began tracing his contacts, 18th Wing officials at Kadena Air Base said in a message posted to Facebook on Tuesday.

“He has been in restriction of movement during the entire period of contact tracing and has not come in contact with any members in the local community,” the message said. “The 18th Wing leadership and medical teams are tracking this situation very closely and are ensuring those affected receive the best possible care.”

In response to a comment on the Facebook post, base officials said medical teams examine a subject’s contacts going back 48 hours prior to the development of symptoms, per Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines.

“In this case, this person had been under [restriction of movement] well outside of the 48-hour window prior to onset of symptoms,” officials wrote. “Bottom line: This person had no contact with the community inside or outside of Kadena Air Base.”

The World Health Organization has said the incubation period for the virus appears to be between one and 14 days.

Officials previously stated that the 18th Wing airman had recently returned from Europe and that the person’s movements were restricted for 15 days afterwards. Symptoms developed while the airman was in restriction.

Since that news broke Saturday afternoon, a second airman assigned to Kadena Air Base has tested positive. Base missions and services were reduced Monday and Tuesday as a result.

“Our collective ability to prevent further exposure is of the utmost importance right now,” the Facebook message said.

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Navy, Marine base commanders in Japan urge cooperation on anti-virus measures

By JOSEPH DITZLER
Stars and Stripes

The commander of Sasebo Naval Base imposed a series of closures of many base activities Tuesday to prepare for the coronavirus, which is cropping up on military bases in Japan.

Base commander Capt. Brad Stallings took an urgent tone and cited “folks who are not following the guidance, which is placing the force and the community at risk,” according to his announcement on Sasebo’s Facebook page.

“I take this situation dead seriously,” Stallings wrote. “It is up to each and every one of us to follow the guidance and keep this virus out of our community. For you that are ‘all in now, thank you!’

No cases of coronavirus have been reported at either Sasebo or Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni,

whose commander announced similar measures Monday, according to Facebook posts.

Effective immediately, Stallings wrote, the Sasebo base gym is closed, along with bars and playgrounds. Most retail shops along with theaters and hobby shops are closed. The commander is urging a community effort, said base spokesman Aki Nichols. Civilians as well as military need to cooperate, he said.

Civilian Defense Department employees and contractors, while mostly exempt from military orders aimed at stemming the coronavirus pandemic, have been encouraged to comply as commanders increasingly tighten restrictions.

Stallings emphasized cooperation in capital letters: “THIS IS FOR ALL 7,500 INDIVIDUALS THAT LIVE AND WORK” on

Sasebo.

At MCAS Iwakuni, base commander Col. Lance Lewis late Monday declared similar measures.

Lewis wrote that he expects active-duty Marines, their families, Defense Department civilians and contractors to “be smart and follow the guidelines in place. Even the most rigid direction is all for naught if someone is selfish enough to break the rules.”

He, too, stressed personal hygiene and social distancing.

“Instead of pushing the rules, live your life like the health of every person on this base depends on your actions,” Lewis wrote. “Spiller alert: We are counting on everyone to protect everyone else.”

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Health care workers dread tough decisions

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A nurse with asthma, a grandfather with cancer and a homeless man with no known family are wracked with coronavirus-induced fevers. They are struggling to breathe, and a ventilator could save their lives. But who gets one when there aren't enough to go around?

Health care workers are dreading the prospect of such dire scenarios as U.S. hospitals brace for a looming surge in patients who need breathing machines and other resources that could soon be in critically short supply.

That has meant dusting off playbooks they've never before had to implement on how to fairly ration limited resources during an emergency.

"I pray for their good judgment and their capacity as they make very difficult choices," said Erik Curren, whose 77-year-old father died last month from respiratory complications related to the virus after becoming infected at an assisted living home in Florida.

Harrowing scenarios already are unfolding in country after country hard-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, including Spain, where one nursing home official said sick residents are dying after being unable to get into overflowing hospitals.

Like much of the rest of the world, ventilators that help people breathe are in particular demand across the U.S., given the respiratory problems common among people severely ill with COVID-19.

As many as 900,000 coronavirus patients in the U.S. could need the machines during the outbreak, according to the Society for Critical Care Medicine. Yet the group estimates the country has only 200,000, many of which already are being used by



Medical supplies are displayed before a news conference at the Jacob Javits Center in New York on March 23. Health care workers are dreading the prospect of deciding which patients would get a ventilator that could save their lives when there aren't enough for everyone.

other patients.

In New York City, the U.S. epicenter of the outbreak, one hospital logged 13 coronavirus deaths in a day and officials are setting up hundreds of hospital beds in a sprawling convention center as cases climbed past 30,000.

In preparation, health officials across the country are reviewing guidelines from sources including state governments and medical groups on how to ration limited resources in emergencies.

The general principle spanning those plans: Bring the most

benefit to the greatest number of people and prioritize those with the best chance of recovery. But exactly how that's determined is fraught.

Automatically excluding certain groups from receiving ventilators, such as those with severe lung disease, invokes ethical issues, said Dr. Douglas White at the University of Pittsburgh. Many hospitals seeking guidance on COVID-19 in recent weeks have adopted a policy he devised without such exclusions, he said.

Guidelines previously devel-

oped by New York state's health department exclude some seriously ill people from receiving limited ventilators in major emergencies, but note that making old age an automatic disqualifier would be discriminatory. The plans go on to add, however, that given the "strong societal preference for saving children," age could be considered in a tie-breaker when a child's life is at stake.

Recommendations published this week by German medical associations in response to COVID-

19 also say age alone shouldn't be a deciding factor. Among the situations where they said intensive care should not be provided if availability is in short supply: if the patient would need permanent intensive care to survive.

The crushing emotional burden of carrying out potentially life-and-death decisions is why the guidelines typically designate separate triage teams to make the call, rather than leaving it to the doctors and nurses providing bedside care.

"This is a really terrifying decision — you don't want any doctor or nurse to be alone with this decision," said Nancy Berlinger of the Hastings Center, a bioethics research institute.

Having separate teams make decisions also is intended to ensure patients get a fair shot at care regardless of their race, social status or other personal factors.

Berlinger noted that underlying social inequities can still persist — for example, poorer people tend to be sicker — but that those are deeper injustices that can't be remedied in the throes of a pandemic.

Another grim calculation that experts say hospitals could make is how long a patient might need a hospital bed or ventilator and how many more lives the machine might otherwise save. That would help forecast an even more wrenching decision many doctors in the U.S. likely have never faced — whether to take a patient off a machine to free it up for others.

The norms don't apply in the current crisis and taking precious resources away from one patient to save others in a pandemic "is not an act of killing and does not require the patient's consent," said a paper addressing the COVID-19 emergency published last week in the New England Journal of Medicine.

Virus: Deaths climb rapidly in US, which is poised to overtake China's toll

FROM FRONT PAGE

death of a person under 18 years old, though details about the person's exact age were not disclosed. About 9,500 people are hospitalized with the disease statewide. More than 66,000 people statewide have tested positive for the virus, including more than 38,000 in New York City.

Even before the governor's appeal, close to 80,000 former nurses, doctors and other professionals were stepping up to volunteer in New York, and a Navy hospital ship had arrived with 1,000 beds to relieve pressure on the city's overwhelmed hospitals.

Spain and Italy are still struggling to avoid the collapse of their health systems, with Spain saying hospitals in at least half of its 17 regions are at or very near their ICU bed limits and more than 13,000 medical workers are among the country's reported 94,417 infections.

Hundreds of hotels across Spain have been converted into recep-

tion rooms for patients in less-serious condition, and authorities are building makeshift field hospitals in sports centers, libraries and exhibition halls. So far they have added 23,000 beds.

Overnight, Spain recorded 849 new deaths, the highest daily toll since the pandemic hit the southern European country. It has now claimed the lives of 8,269 people in Spain, forcing Madrid to open a second temporary morgue this week after an ice rink pressed into service last week became overwhelmed.

Authorities are shifting ventilating machines to regions with the highest number of ICU patients.

Deaths climbed rapidly in the United States, which was poised to overtake China's reported virus death toll of 3,309. But experts say all numbers reported by governments and states in this pandemic are faulty in different ways, due to the lack of testing, mild virus cases that are missed

or the determination of some governments to try to shape their pandemic narrative.

"This is going to be a long-term battle and we cannot let down our guard," cautioned Dr. Takeshi Kasai, the World Health Organization's regional director for the Western Pacific. "We need every country to keep responding according to their local situation."

Hard-hit Italy and Spain now account for more than half of the 40,636 COVID-19 deaths reported worldwide and the U.S. has the most confirmed cases at 174,467, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

Italy's death toll rose to nearly 12,428 — the highest in the world by far — but its rates of new infections were slowing.

A 12-year-old girl became the youngest person to die in Belgium, which has counted 705 deaths so far, including 98 in the last day. It was not disclosed whether she suffered from any underlying condition. The country of about

11.5 million people has reported more than 12,775 infections.

National crisis-center coronavirus spokesman Emmanuel Andre said Belgian authorities expect the disease to reach its peak in coming days, and that "we will arrive at a point where we're close to saturation point at our hospitals."

To the east, Russia registered 500 new confirmed cases in the biggest spike since the beginning of the outbreak, bringing its total to 2,337. Moscow, the capital, has been on lockdown since Monday and the government is edging toward declaring a national state of emergency.

Worldwide, more than 826,000 people have been infected and at least 174,115 have recovered, according to Johns Hopkins University.

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. But for others, especially older adults and people with exist-

ing health problems, it can cause severe symptoms like pneumonia and even death.

China on Tuesday reported just one new death from the coronavirus and 48 new cases, claiming that all new infections came from overseas.

In Serbia, Hungary and other nations, concerns were rising that populist leaders were using the situation to try to seize more power and silence critics.

The economic devastation continued, with British Airways suspending all its flights at Gatwick Airport amid a collapse in demand as nations close borders and airlines slash flights.

In Japan, the countdown clocks were reset and ticking again for the Tokyo Olympics. The clocks now read 479 days to go, with the games scheduled to begin on July 23, 2021.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Carrier skipper seeks to isolate crew ashore

By LOLITA C. BALDOR

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Facing a growing outbreak of the coronavirus, the captain of the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt is asking for permission to isolate the bulk of his roughly 5,000 crew members on shore, which would take the warship out of duty in an effort to save lives.

The ship is docked in Guam. In a memo to Navy leaders, the

ship's captain, Capt. Brett Crozier, said the spread of the disease is ongoing and accelerating, and said that removing all but 10% of the crew is a "necessary risk" in order to stop the spread of the virus.

U.S. Navy leaders on Tuesday were scrambling to determine how to best respond to the extraordinary request as dozens of crew members tested positive.

"We are not at war. Sailors do not need to die. If we do not act

now, we are failing to properly take care of our most trusted asset our sailors," Crozier said in a memo obtained by The Associated Press.

A U.S. Navy official said Crozier alerted commanders on Sunday evening of the continuing challenges in isolating the virus. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations, said Crozier wants more isolated housing for the crew and that Navy leadership is

reviewing options to ensure the health and safety of the crew.

In Asia, a carrier presence is central to what the Pentagon has identified as a fundamental shift from fighting insurgent and extremist conflicts in the Middle East to a return to "great power competition." That means, principally, a bigger focus on China, including its militarization of disputed areas of the South China Sea.

The carrier, like other Navy

ships, is vulnerable to infectious disease spread given its close quarters.

The massive ship is more than 1,000 feet long; sailors are spread out across a labyrinth of decks linked by steep ladder-like stairs and narrow corridors. Enlisted sailors and officers have separate living quarters, but they routinely grab their food from crowded buffet lines and eat at tables joined end-to-end.

15,000 guardsmen now on active duty

By ROSE L. THAYER

Stars and Stripes

A team of 19 Arizona National Guard soldiers built a 50-bed medical station overnight Sunday to begin supporting the Navajo Nation in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

Eight soldiers from the Iowa National Guard set up two tents Friday at a Department of Veterans Affairs hospital to screen people entering.

In Pennsylvania, 25 National Guard members unloaded equipment during the weekend to help the Federal Emergency Management Agency build a non-coronavirus overflow clinic at a school.

These are some of the missions of the nearly 15,000 National Guard members working in every U.S. state and territory.

"This pivot into the medical realm demonstrates the depth and breadth of the skill sets that the Arizona National Guard brings to emergency response," Maj. Gen. Michael McGuire, Arizona's adjutant general and director of the Department of Emergency and Military Affairs, said in a statement. Prior to Sunday, the state's troops had focused on filling gaps in the grocery supply chain by getting products from warehouses to stores.

"We will adapt as needed to defeat this pandemic and we will be always ready, always there for the citizens of this great state," McGuire said.

Arizona now has more than 1,000 troops activated to respond to the pandemic.

National Guard troops throughout the country are also working with the Army Corps of Engineers

to increase medical capacity in other states, including New York, where the death toll has climbed precipitously since Sunday. Other missions include delivering supplies and protective equipment, support coronavirus testing sites and delivering food in hard-hit communities.

"This response isn't just about delivering food or supporting [coronavirus] test centers. It's about protecting our children, parents and grandparents. Our nation is looking to the National Guard to help and we can't let them down," Gen. Joseph Lengyel, chief of the National Guard Bureau, said in a statement.

With more than 2,700 activated service members, New York National Guard has the largest contingent of troops. Some of them are working with about 600 active-duty Army soldiers at a field hospital in New York City's Jacob Javits Convention Center.

Though the troops are following protocols to mitigate the spread of the virus among themselves, they are not immune. On Friday, the Maryland National Guard confirmed a service member had tested positive for the virus and was moved to isolation. The Baltimore Sun reported. About 20 additional soldiers who came into contact with the soldier are now being quarantined as a precaution to prevent the spread of the virus.

"All elements of society are impacted by [coronavirus]," said Maj. Kurt Rauschenberg, Maryland National Guard spokesman. "It's something that's impacted the Maryland National Guard as well. We're monitoring on personnel closely and responding ap-



OFFICE OF MAYOR ERIC GARCETTI/AP

National Guard troops set up beds at a medical station at the Los Angeles Convention center to help relieve nearby hospitals.

propriately. This virus affects us just as it affects everybody else. We're all in this together."

At least 26 members of the Guard have contracted the virus, including a Colorado Guard member on duty at a coronavirus testing site, Lengyel said last week

during a news conference.

On Friday, the Defense Department took steps to move all Guard members from state active-duty status to a federally funded status known as Title 32. This would allow states to remain in control of how the troops are used, but

also give the service members federal benefits such as Tricare health insurance and access to military medical facilities during their activation.

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constituent services, he said.

"Soon enough, I'll be back out of the military and in my full roll as congressman," Rose said. "Stay safe, stay strong, and I'll see you soon."

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New York congressman activated for National Guard duty

By NIKKI WENTLING

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Rep. Max Rose, a Democrat from New York, will start National Guard duty Wednesday after his unit was called to support the state's

response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Rose, a combat veteran who served in Afghanistan, is a captain in the Army National Guard. He will serve at Staten Island facilities as an operations officer in the coronavirus response.

He made the announcement in a video posted to Twitter on Tuesday.

"You won't be hearing from me as much because I'll be activated in the military," Rose said. "This is a small, small thing compared to the doctors, nurses, our front-

line medical staff and our first responders out there each and every day putting their lives on the line without the equipment they so desperately need."

Rose represents Staten Island and parts of southern Brooklyn. His staff will continue to work on

VIRUS OUTBREAK ROUNDUP

Cruise ship with sick, dead aboard begs Fla. to dock

Associated Press

MIAMI — As a cruise ship stranded at sea with dozens sick and four dead makes for Florida, passengers who have been confined to their rooms for more than a week are anxious for relief, hoping Gov. Ron DeSantis will change his mind and allow them to disembark despite confirmed coronavirus cases aboard.

Hundreds of passengers and crew members from the *Zaandam* have not stepped on dry land for 15 days as the virus prompted authorities around the world to seal borders, implement checkpoints and force people into quarantine. Passengers were asked to keep their rooms dark and leave their drapes closed when they passed through the Panama Canal on Sunday after days of wrangling with local authorities.

The *Zaandam*'s plans to dock as early as Wednesday in Florida are still up in the air but have already been rebuked by local officials and DeSantis, who says health care resources are stretched too thin. The governor said he has been in contact with the Coast Guard and the White House about diverting the ship.

Broward County officials will meet Tuesday to decide whether to let the ship dock at its Port Everglades cruise ship terminal, where workers who greet passengers were among Florida's first confirmed coronavirus cases.

Dozens on board the Holland America Line ship have reported flu-like symptoms and four people have died, with at least two of the deaths blamed on the coronavirus by Panamanian authorities. The company said eight others have tested positive for COVID-19 but 2,300 passengers and crew members are in good health.

Louisiana

BATON ROUGE — Gov. John Bel Edwards said Monday that he will extend Louisiana's "stay at home" order through the end of April, in line with President Donald Trump's most recent guidance, as the number of Louisiana residents who have died from COVID-19 jumped significantly overnight.

Louisiana's health department reported that 185 residents had died from the disease caused by the new coronavirus, 34 more than the number reported on Sunday, Edwards has said. Louisiana has the second-highest COVID-19 death rate per capita among states, and he's warned that the New Orleans region is running low on ventilators, which the deadliest-hit patients need.

The Democratic governor's stay-home order was supposed to end April 13, but he said he would extend it to April 30. That will keep schools closed, nonessential businesses shuttered, restaurants limited to delivery and takeout and gatherings allow 10 people banned. Edwards thanked Trump for revising the guidelines.

"This is obviously very helpful for states like ours because it sends a clear message that we are nowhere near over the hump, that we still have an awful lot of work to do to try to flatten the curve, and I think it creates a realistic expectation in the public about the time horizon that we are on," Edwards said.

Texas

ORANGE — Texas extending a mandatory self-quarantine to drivers crossing from neighboring Louisiana, one of the hot spots in the coronavirus outbreak in the U.S., began Monday with few clear signs of how the order was being enforced as traffic moved freely across state lines.

Republican Gov. Greg Abbott's order Sunday ratcheted up attempts to isolate travelers coming from areas of the country where coronavirus cases are rising fastest. Abbott said Texas state troopers would increase patrols near the Louisiana border and require drivers who are stopped to fill out forms indicating where they would isolate.

But how troopers would conduct those patrols was unclear on the first day the order went into effect.

The Texas Department of Public Safety said in a statement it would not disclose details about enforcement, adding there would be no checkpoint on the Louisiana border at this time. It did not immediately respond to requests about how many drivers had been stopped Monday.

Massachusetts

BOSTON — The superintendent of a Massachusetts veteran's home was removed from his duties Monday after 11 residents died, including at least five who had tested positive for coronavirus and another five whose results are pending.

Bennett Walsh was placed on paid administrative leave following the deaths at the Soldiers' Home in Hingham, The Boston Globe reported.

Another surviving 11 residents have tested positive for the virus at the home, as have five staff members, according to the state Department of Veterans Services.

Health and Human Services Deputy Secretary Dan Tsai said the state has created an on-site clinical team to respond.

Missouri

KANSAS CITY — The number of confirmed coronavirus cases in Missouri surpassed 1,000 on Monday and the state's death toll rose to 13.

Health officials said that as of Monday afternoon, 1,031 cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in Missouri. That is an increase of 128 from Sunday.

One of the deaths announced on Sunday was William "Al" Grimes,



JOHN LOCHER/AP

People prepare places to sleep at a makeshift camp for the homeless Monday in Las Vegas. Officials opened part of a parking lot as a makeshift homeless shelter after a local shelter closed when a man staying there tested positive for the coronavirus.

the Henry County Democratic Party chairman. He died in Clinton, said state Chairwoman Jean Peters Baker.

Minnesota

MINNEAPOLIS — Minnesota students experienced some glitches as they began learning from home Monday, a new normal that may last the rest of the school year as the state tries to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Minnesota had 576 confirmed cases as of Monday, up 73 from Sunday. The state's death toll from COVID-19 rose by one, to 10. Health officials said 56 patients were hospitalized Monday, including 24 in intensive care.

Gov. Tim Walz gave the closing order two weeks ago to allow administrators and teachers time to figure out how to make distance learning work for the state's nearly 900,000 public and charter school students. They're not scheduled to return to their classrooms until at least April 30.

Troubles with the popular Schoology learning management system were so numerous that it was trending on Twitter in Minnesota.

"We're asking for patience from our educators, our families and our students as we learn in this new way for the very first time," Deputy Education Commissioner Heather Mueller said on the governor's daily conference call with reporters.

California

LOS ANGELES — California is recruiting thousands of retired health care workers along with medical and nursing students to help as emergency hospitals that could include sites like the Los Angeles Coliseum and other sports arenas handle an anticipated flood of coronavirus patients, Gov. Gavin Newsom said Monday.

Newsom signed an executive order to temporarily expand the health care workforce to staff the facilities that will supply the 50,000 hospital beds he estimated could be needed when the surge peaks. State models now estimate the peak occurring in mid-May.

The state will waive certain professional licensing and certification requirements to get workers in the field faster.

"If you're a nursing school student, a medical school student, we need you," Newsom said. "If you've just retired in the last few years, we need you."

Hawaii

HONOLULU — Hawaii Gov. David Ige further tightened travel restrictions to limit the spread of the coronavirus on Monday by ordering people moving between islands to adhere to a 14-day self-quarantine.

The order, which takes effect Wednesday, won't apply to essential workers like health care workers traveling to other islands.

The order comes a week after Ige ordered people arriving from other states or overseas to follow the same two-week quarantine. He's also ordered all residents to stay at home for the next month.

Earlier, a University of Hawaii economist told lawmakers the coronavirus pandemic has plunged the state's economy into a recession that's unprecedented for people alive in Hawaii today.

"We know Hawaii is already in a deep recession. That recession will surpass anything we've seen in our lifetimes," Carl Bonham told members of a House committee on the economic and financial effects of the virus.

Michigan

LANSING — Gov. Gretchen Whitmer on Monday signed onto a \$150 million funding package to fight the coronavirus pandemic

while vetoing \$167 million she would be asked to save as Michigan confronts what are expected to be plummeting tax revenues amid the pandemic's economic fallout.

Just weeks ago, the Democratic governor and Republican-led Legislature had agreed to additional mid-year spending to fund their priorities after a budget impasse last fall.

"The world has changed since those negotiations, and we must react and change along with it," Whitmer told reporters while also announcing directives to restrict state departments' discretionary spending and to suspend hiring.

She blocked \$35 million for a new program she had touted that would have provided financial assistance for adults age 25 and older to attend community college. Also vetoed was \$16 million to partially revive Pure Michigan, the state's tourism campaign.

North Carolina

RALEIGH — North Carolina's new stay-at-home order won't show any conclusive effect on blunting the intensity of the new coronavirus for about two weeks, the state epidemiologist said Monday.

Restrictions on business operations and prohibitions of gatherings of more than 10 people issued by Gov. Roy Cooper on Friday took effect at 5 p.m. Monday. Several urban counties and some cities already began enforcing similar orders late last week.

Health officials reported a sixth death related to the coronavirus Monday — the first reported in Mecklenburg County. Residents from Harnett, Cabarrus, Buncombe, Johnston and Rowan counties also have died. The state now counts more than 1,300 positive COVID-19 cases, a jump of 140 from Sunday. The number of people hospitalized from the virus has grown to more than 135.

NATION



MATTHEW BROWN/AP

A bison walks through the snow in Yellowstone Lamar Valley near Mammoth Hot Springs, Wyo.

Yellowstone slaughters wild bison to shrink park's herds

By MATTHEW BROWN
Associated Press

BILLINGS, Mont. — Yellowstone National Park is done capturing wild bison for the year after rounding up almost 550 of the wild animals and sending most to slaughter as part of a population control program, park officials said.

The culling is carried out under a legal agreement between federal and state officials aimed at preventing the spread of an animal disease to cattle.

In addition to those captured, about 270 bison have been killed by Native American tribal hunters as the hulking beasts migrated outside the park to graze at lower elevations in Montana, according to figures released Friday.

The annual slaughter of an iconic animal that's featured on

the National Park Service logo has long drawn criticism from wildlife advocates and some members of Congress.

Officials insist that the program is necessary to prevent cattle in the Yellowstone region from being infected with brucellosis, which can cause abortions in pregnant animals.

Park officials had sought to reduce Yellowstone's approximately 4,900 bison by 600 to 900 animals this year. At least 822 animals have been killed or removed, according to figures provided by park officials.

Before closing down the bison capture pens along the park border near the small Montana community of Gardiner in recent days, workers consigned 442 bison to slaughter, said Yellowstone bison biologist Chris Geremia. The meat is distributed to members of

American Indian tribes.

Of the animals that were captured, 105 were kept alive for potential enrollment in a quarantine program that transfers disease-free animals to locations outside the park. One bison died in the park's holding pens.

To reduce the number of bison slaughtered, state and park officials have allowed the animals to roam more freely in parts of Montana and recently sought to expand the quarantine program so that bison delivered disease-free can be relocated.

But that has not satisfied critics. Wildlife advocates last week filed a lawsuit in federal court in Washington D.C. seeking to protect Yellowstone bison under the Endangered Species Act.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has previously rejected calls to protect the animals.

Trump rolls back mileage standard

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration rolled back ambitious Obama-era vehicle mileage standards Tuesday, raising the ceiling on damaging fossil fuel emissions for years to come and gutting one of the United States' biggest efforts against climate change.

The Trump administration released a final rule Tuesday on mileage standards through 2026. The change — after two years of Trump threatening and fighting states and a faction of automakers that opposed the move — waters down a tough Obama mileage standard that would have encouraged automakers to ramp up production of electric vehicles and more fuel-efficient gas and diesel vehicles.

"We are delivering on President Trump's promise to correct the current fuel economy and greenhouse gas emissions standards," Andrew Wheeler, head of the Environmental Protection Agency, said in a statement Tuesday marking the release.

He said the final rule "puts in place a sensible" national program that "strikes the right regulatory balance that protects our environment, and sets reasonable targets for the auto industry. This rule supports our economy, and the safety of American families."

Opponents contend the change — gutting his predecessor's legacy effort against climate-changing fossil fuel emissions —

appears driven by Trump's push to undo regulatory initiatives of former President Barack Obama and say even the administration has had difficulty pointing to the kind of specific, demonstrable benefits to drivers, public health and safety or the economy that normally accompany standards changes.

The Trump administration says the looser mileage standards will allow consumers to keep buying the less fuel-efficient SUVs that U.S. drivers have favored for years. Opponents say it will kill several hundred more Americans a year through dirtier air, compared to the Obama standards.

Even "given the catastrophe they're in with the coronavirus, they're pursuing a policy that's going to hurt public health and kill people," said Chet France, a former 39-year veteran of the EPA, where he served as a senior official over emissions and mileage standards.

Delaware Sen. Tom Carper, the senior Democrat on the Senate Environmental and Public Works Committee, called it "the height of irresponsibility for this administration to finalize a rollback that will lead to dirtier air while our country is working around the clock to respond to a respiratory pandemic whose effects may be exacerbated by air pollution."

The Obama administration mandated 5% annual increases in fuel economy.

US extends waivers on Iran nuclear cooperation sanctions

By MATTHEW LEE
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration on Monday renewed several waivers on U.S. sanctions against Iran, allowing Russian, European and Chinese companies to continue to work on Iran's civilian nuclear facilities without drawing American penalties.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo signed off on the waiver extensions but couched the decision as one that continues restrictions on Iran's atomic work.

"Iran's continued expansion of nuclear activities is unacceptable. The regime's nuclear extortion to international peace and security," State Department spokeswoman Morgan Ortugas said in a statement.

Current and former officials familiar with the matter said that Pompeo had opposed extending the waivers, which are among the few remaining components of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal that the administration has not canceled.

The officials said Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, how-

ever, had prevailed in an internal debate on the subject last week by arguing that the coronavirus pandemic made eliminating the waivers unpalatable at a time when the administration is being criticized for refusing to ease sanctions to deal with the outbreak.

Last week, the administration slapped new sanctions on 20 Iranian people and companies for supporting Shiite militia in Iraq held responsible for attacks on bases where U.S. forces are located. At the same time, however, it extended another sanctions waiver to allow energy-starved Iraq to

keep importing Iranian power.

President Donald Trump withdrew from the nuclear deal in 2018 and has steadily reimposed U.S. sanctions on Iran that had been eased or lifted under its terms. The so-called "civilian-nuclear cooperation" waivers allow foreign companies to do work at some of Iran's declared nuclear sites without becoming subject to U.S. sanctions.

Deal supporters have said that the waivers give international experts a valuable window into Iran's atomic program that might otherwise not exist. They have

also said that some of the work, particularly at the Tehran reactor on nuclear isotopes which can be used in medicine, is humanitarian in nature.

But Iran hawks in Congress have been pressing Pompeo to eliminate all the waivers, saying that they should be revoked because they give Iran access to technology which could be used for weapons. The hawks most strenuously objected to the waiver that allowed work at Iran's once-secret Fordow facility, which is built into a mountain.

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NATION

US outlines plans for Venezuela transition, relief on sanctions

By JOSHUA GOODMAN
Associated Press

MIAMI — The Trump administration is prepared to lift sanctions on Venezuela in support of a new proposal to form a transitional government representing allies of both Nicolas Maduro and opposition leader Juan Guaido, U.S. officials said.

The plan, which was to be presented Tuesday by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, echoes a proposal made over the weekend by Guaido that shows how growing concerns about the coronavirus, which threatens to overwhelm the South American country's already collapsed health system and crippled economy, are reviving U.S. attempts to pull the mili-

tary apart from Maduro.

What's being dubbed the "Democratic Framework for Venezuela" would require Maduro and Guaido to step aside and hand power to a five-member council of state to govern the country until presidential and parliamentary elections can be held in late 2020, according to a written summary of the proposal seen by The Associated Press.

Four of the members would be appointed by the opposition-controlled National Assembly that Guaido heads. To draw buy-in from the ruling socialist party, a two-thirds majority would be required. The fifth member, who would serve as interim president until elections are held, would be



Nicolas Maduro

named by the other council members. Neither Maduro nor Guaido would be on the council.

"The hope is that this setup promotes the selection of people who are very broadly respected and known as people who can work with the other side," U.S. Special Representative for Venezuela Elliott Abrams told the AP in a preview of the plan. "Even people in the regime look to this and realize Maduro has to go, but the rest of us are being treated well and fairly."

The plan also outlines for the first time U.S. requirements for lifting sanctions against Maduro officials and the oil industry — the source of nearly all of Venezuela's foreign income.

Epidemic likely dooms Missouri recreational marijuana campaign

Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — The spread of the coronavirus has likely doomed an effort to get a proposal to legalize recreational marijuana in Missouri on the November ballot, according to organizers of the campaign.

With businesses closing, public gatherings restricted and more people staying at home because of the virus, it is becoming harder to find voters to sign the petitions, said Dan Viets, chairman of the Missourians for a New Approach committee.

The campaign has collected 60,000 signatures. It needs to collect 170,000 signatures by May 3 to get the question of whether to legalize the use of marijuana for those 21 or older on the November ballot. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported.

Campaign manager John Payne said that because of social distancing and other safety concerns, there is no practical way for campaign workers to gather the signatures. He said that the campaign is exploring options and suggested the state could extend the deadline for turning in the signatures.

But Maura Browning, spokeswoman for Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft, said that Ashcroft doesn't have the authority to extend the deadline because the date is outlined in the Missouri Constitution.

Payne said that the campaign would try to put a similar question on the 2022 ballot if the 2020 campaign ends.

If the question makes the ballot, Missouri would have a chance to become the 12th state in the U.S. to fully legalize marijuana.

Wyoming court to make ruling on gender changes to birth certificates

Associated Press

CHEYENNE, Wyo. — The Wyoming Supreme Court is expected to rule on a case that would determine whether transgender residents can change the genders on their birth certificates.

The case could decide if the Laramie County District Court has jurisdiction to recognize a change of sex by a transgender woman, The Wyoming Tribune Eagle reported Sunday.

The high court is also expected to decide whether the jurisdiction would comply with state statute

and rules for the Wyoming Department of Health.

The woman, identified only by the initials M.H., filed to have her name and gender legally changed in April 2019.

The state health department said that the request required a court ruling.

A Laramie district court judge said that Wyoming birth certifications identify a person's sex, not gender, and denied the petition because of a lack of jurisdiction.

The district court filed a brief arguing that the Wyoming Legis-

lature has not given the court the power to issue a gender change order, but the health department's rules allow the sex on a birth certificate to be amended.

The court said that it "could not usurp the power of the legislature to create statutory authority while the legislature did not establish."

The woman's lawyer said that the district court left them in a "Catch-22" situation, and they hope the Supreme Court appeal will allow her to proceed.

"I'm representing a transgen-

der woman who is exercising her rights under Wyoming law," attorney George Powers said. "The statutes and law required her to get a court order to exercise those rights."

The Legislature has not kept pace with changes affecting gender and vital statistics, said Democratic state Rep. Sara Burlingame, who noted that some statutes have been on the books since Wyoming gained statehood.

"That law no longer fits in 2020," Burlingame said. "We have wholly different issues."

Current Wyoming law does not contain language recognizing same-sex marriage or recognize that women can be police officers or firefighters.

Burlingame said, "You think a woman never put a fire out"

Burlingame said that she hopes to bring future legislation to the law.

"We're just doing what we've always done in Wyoming, which is stick up for our neighbors," Burlingame said. "We don't need to agree on all the particulars. We just take care of each other."

Stripes SERVICE DIRECTORY

The Daily Guide to Navigating the European Business Market

Transportation

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Transportation

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NATION

FBI reaches out to senator over his stock sales

By ERIC TUCKER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON—The FBI has reached out to Sen. Richard Burr about his sale of stocks before the coronavirus caused markets to plummet, a person familiar with the matter said Monday.

The outreach suggests federal law enforcement officials may be looking to determine whether the North Carolina Republican exploited advance information when he dumped as much as \$1.7 million in stocks in the days before the coronavirus wreaked havoc on the economy.

Burr has denied wrongdoing but has also requested an ethics review of the stock sales.

The Justice Department's action, first reported by CNN, was confirmed by a person familiar with the matter who was not authorized to discuss it and spoke on condition of anonymity. The Justice Department declined to comment.

In a statement, Alice Fisher, an attorney for Burr, said, "The law is clear that any American—including a Senator—may participate in the stock market based on public information, as Senator Burr did."

"When this issue arose, Senator Burr immediately asked the Senate Ethics Committee to conduct a complete review, and he will cooperate with that review as well as any other appropriate inquiry. Senator Burr welcomes

a thorough review of the facts in this matter, which will establish that his actions were appropriate," the statement said.

Burr, whose stock sales were first reported by ProPublica and The Center for Responsive Politics, is one of several senators whose financial dealings have generated scrutiny in recent weeks.

Senate records show that Burr and his wife sold between roughly \$600,000 and \$1.7 million in more than 30 transactions in late January and mid-



Burr

February, just before the market began to nosedive and government health officials began to sound alarms about the virus. Several of the stocks were in companies that own hotels.

Burr has acknowledged selling the stocks because of the coronavirus but said he relied "solely on public news reports," specifically CNBC's daily health and science reporting out of Asia, to make the financial decisions.

There is no indication that Burr, whose six-year term ends in 2023 and who does not plan to run for reelection, was acting on inside information.

Idaho governor signs into law 2 anti-transgender measures

Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho — Idaho Gov. Brad Little on Monday signed into law two anti-transgender bills, making Idaho the first among states that introduced some 40 such bills this year to enact them.

The Republican governor approved legislation that prohibits transgender people from changing the sex listed on their birth certificates, and another that bans transgender girls and women from competing in women's sports.

The birth certificate measure ignores a 2018 federal court ruling that a past law barring transgender people from making the birth certificate changes violated the U.S. Constitution. The judge scrapped the ban and warned against new rules. The Idaho attorney general's office, which didn't appeal the ruling, said it

could cost \$1 million if the state had to defend the ban again and lost.

"There's an injunction that already absolutely forbids this policy, and the government can't enforce this law without violating a court order," said Peter Renn of Lambda Legal, the law firm that represented two transgender women whose lawsuit led to the court ruling. "The ramifications of contempt (of court) are quite furious."

Backers of the legislation said the law is needed so Idaho has accurate birth records.

The sports ban applies to all sports teams sponsored by public schools, colleges and universities. A girls' or women's team will not be open to transgender students who identify as female. Backers said the law was needed because transgender female athletes have physical advantages.



TONY DEJAK/AP

Executive Director Chrissie France talks about Preterm, the busiest abortion clinic in Ohio, in the procedure room in Cleveland in February. A judge ruled Monday that a new Ohio order is unconstitutional if it prevents abortions from being carried out during the coronavirus outbreak.

Judges slow abortion bans in Texas, Ohio, Ala. amid virus

Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa — Federal judges on Monday temporarily blocked efforts in Texas and Alabama to ban abortions during the coronavirus pandemic, handing Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers a victory as clinics across the U.S. filed lawsuits to stop states from trying to shutter them during the outbreak.

A new Ohio order is also unconstitutional if it prevents abortions from being carried out, a separate judge ruled Monday. The ruling instructed clinics to determine on a case-by-case basis if an abortion can be delayed to maximize resources — such as preserving personal protective equipment — needed to fight the coronavirus. If the abortion is deemed necessary and can't be delayed, it's declared legally essential.

The rulings indicated judges were pushing back on Republican-controlled states including abortion in sweeping orders as the outbreak grows in the U.S. In Texas, the ruling came down after state Attorney General Ken Paxton, a Republican, said abortion was included in a statewide ban on nonessential surgeries.

But U.S. District Judge Lee Yeakel said the "Supreme Court has spoken clearly" on a woman's right to abortion. One abortion provider in Texas, Whole Woman's Health, said it had canceled more than 150 appointments in the days after the Texas order went into effect.

"There can be no outright ban on such a procedure," Yeakel wrote. Paxton said the state would appeal.

The rulings happened Monday as lawsuits were also filed in Iowa and Oklahoma, after governors in those states similarly ordered a stop to non-emergency procedures and specifically included abortion among them.

The lawsuits were filed by Planned Parenthood, the American Civil Liberties Union, the

‘Preventing them from getting an abortion doesn’t do anything to stop the COVID-19 virus, it just takes the decision whether to have a child out of their hands.’

Randall Marshall
executive director, ACLU of Alabama

Center for Reproductive Rights and local lawyers in each state. Their aim, like abortion providers in Texas, is to stop state officials from prohibiting abortions as part of temporary policy changes related to the coronavirus pandemic.

Oklahoma Gov. Kevin Stitt announced Friday that abortions were included in his executive order banning all elective surgeries and minor medical procedures until April 7, unless the procedure was necessary to prevent serious health risks to the mother. Stitt said the order was needed to help preserve the state's limited supply of personal protective equipment, like surgical masks and gloves.

A spokesman for Stitt referred questions about the challenge to Attorney General Mike Hunter, who vowed in a statement to defend the ban.

"My office will vigorously defend the governor's executive order and the necessity to give precedence to essential medical procedures during this daunting public health crisis," Hunter's statement said. "Make no mistake, this lawsuit will itself drain significant resources, medical and legal, from emergency efforts and, likely, directly and indirectly, bring harm to Oklahomans as a result."

Monday night, U.S. District Judge Myron Thompson issued a temporary restraining order against Alabama's order, saying the ruling will be in effect through April 13 while he considers additional arguments.

Thompson wrote the state's concerns about conserving medical equipment during the pandemic, does not "outweigh the serious, and, in some cases, permanent, harms imposed by the denial of an individual's right to privacy."

Alabama abortion clinics had said that without court action, they would be forced to cancel more than 20 abortions scheduled for Tuesday.

"Preventing them from getting an abortion doesn't do anything to stop the COVID-19 virus, it just takes the decision whether to have a child out of their hands," Randall Marshall, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Alabama, said in a statement.

Alabama closed many nonessential businesses with a state health order, effective Saturday. Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall said earlier Monday the state would not offer a "blanket exemption" to abortion clinics.

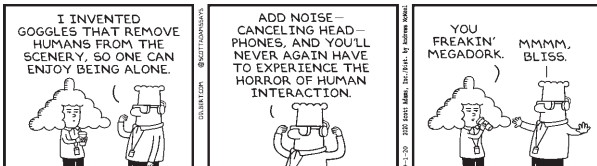
In Ohio, Planned Parenthood and abortion clinics that sued last year to try to thwart a law that bans most abortions after a first detectable fetal heartbeat are asking a court to speed its decision in that case and to consider a recent coronavirus order by the state health director. In filings Monday, the groups' attorneys argued "the state is again attempting to ban abortions" through Dr. Amy Acton's directive barring all "non-essential" procedures and Attorney General Dave Yost's threats that it will be enforced.

Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds spokesman Pat Garrett said the governor "is focused on protecting Iowans from an unprecedented public health disaster, and she suspended all elective surgeries and procedures to preserve Iowa's health care resources."

Frazz



Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



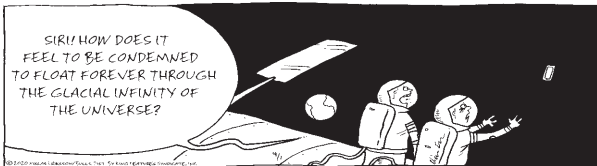
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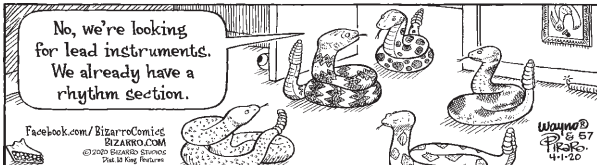
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Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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- 44 Pen name
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- 9 "Selma" director DuVernay
- 10 Speed (up)
- 11 Opposite of "post"
- 17 Feedbag tidbit
- 19 D followers
- 22 Artist Chagall
- 23 Par — (airmail stamp)
- 25 "The Lion King" lion
- 26 Hgt.
- 27 Thinker Descartes
- 28 Make over
- 29 Genesis garden
- 30 Union payment
- 31 Author Ferber
- 35 Piercing cry
- 38 Small stone
- 40 PC screen type
- 42 Dead heat
- 45 Guitarist Atkins
- 47 Not busy
- 48 Prompted
- 49 Clothing, informally
- 50 Witticism
- 51 401(k) alternative
- 52 Tree fluid
- 53 Chest-beating beast
- 54 London's Old —

Answer to Previous Puzzle

MOON	RIF	FF	PCS
TORE	IDEA	LOT	
GHOST	TOWN	OVA	
	TEAL	TATER	
MOWED	PACT		
ENYA	GUESS	WHO	
STA	MINTY	IAN	
HOTLINES	RSTU		
	TONS	DATES	
FREUD	TESH		
LEA	FAST	TRACK	
APR	ULAN	ALOE	
TOP	LIRA	HANG	

4-1

CRYPTOQUIP

HC FHLDNYLD BYWY PKYG

FL M WYG, KBFZZYL NMWR,

H EPYKK H'G DTHLR FC DTMD

MK BYZD NMLMEYNYLD.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SINCE THAT MOTORIST SMILED DURING THE TIME HE CAME TO A STOP, I SUPPOSE HE GRINNED TO A HALT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals W

FACES



Universal Music

Sam Hunt took six years to release his second studio album, "Southside." It's sure to be a hit by the time it's released this Friday.

James Bond, 'Onward,' Sam Hunt and 'The Talk' freshly available this week

Associated Press

Epic adventures, exotic locales and cocktails mixed to order by bartenders — they may be largely off limits for the moment, but not on a device near you.

This week's fresh offerings include a recently released Pixar animated tale, a marathon of James Bond films and new music from country star Sam Hunt. Also out this week is the reissue of a rare Nina Simone record from her time in Paris when feelings of loneliness crept in. And the ladies of "The Talk" return — at a safe social distance — from their own homes.

Here's a collection curated by The Associated Press' entertainment journalists of what's arriving on TV, streaming services and music platforms this week.

Movies

"Never Rarely Sometimes Always": Most people missed what is arguably the best movie of the year so far in theaters. Eliza Hittman's film about a teenage girl trying to get an abortion came out right as they began to close. Focus Features will release it for rental starting Friday.

James Bond marathon: Get the martinis ready, Amazon Prime has 21 James Bond pics in 4K ultra high definition available starting Wednesday.

"Onward" comes to Disney Plus this week.

Disney/Pixar



"The Other Lamb": Raffey Cassidy plays a teenager who has been part of a cult since birth in Malgorzata Szumowska's beautifully disturbing film. Available for rental Friday from IFC, it's not quite a horror, but it is haunting. And it's only 97 minutes.

"Onward": Parents, rejoice; there's another fresh option to keep the family occupied: "Onward" is coming to Disney Plus on Friday. AP Film Writer Jake Coyle wrote that "its eccentric odyssey of two brothers delving into a fantastical past to find their way through grief and self-doubt is a worthy addition to the studio's canon."

—Lindsey Bahr

Music

Nina Simone, "Fodder on My Wings": For a new generation who may have learned about the incomparable Nina Simone in the epic 2015 Netflix documentary "What Happened, Miss Simone?" — here's a chance to discover her talents again in album form. "Fodder on My Wings" was recorded in 1982 not long after Simone moved to Paris. She was said to be lonely and her mental illness worsening while she recorded the album, and the mood is perfectly captured on the title track. There are more gems here: The song "Alone Again (Naturally)" is lyrical improvisation about the death of her father. "Fodder on My Wings" was not made widely available until Friday. The original album will be expanded with three bonus tracks from the recording sessions from a rare French reissue released in 1988. Simone, who died at age 70 in 2003, was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2018.

Sam Hunt, "Southside": Sam Hunt couldn't fall into the trap of the sophomore slump if he tried — his second studio album will reach gold status even before it is released on Friday. That's because "Southside" includes the hit "Body Like a Back Road," has already sold six million tracks. It comes a whopping six years after Hunt released his uber-successful debut album, "Montevallo," which launched five hits and earned him Grammy nominations for best new artist and best country album. Instead of rushing out a follow-up, he took

time to create the album, releasing singles randomly. ("Body Like a Back Road" came in 2017, "Downtown's Dead" in 2018 and "Kinfolks" last year.) "Southside" features his signature sexy-talk delivery and is a mix of personal tones and upbeat jams.

Thundercat, "It Is What It Is": Talented multi-instrumentalist Thundercat pays tribute to his friend and collaborator, the late rapper Mac Miller, on "Fair Chance," one of the songs from his new album, "It Is What It Is." It's a special moment, but the new album, out April 3, isn't all somber: Just press play on "Dragonball Durag," a smooth, West Coast groove, and you'll be in the right mood. "It Is What It Is" includes great collaborations, including guest appearances from Childish Gambino, Ty Dolla Sign, Kamasi Washington and BADBADNOTGOOD.

—Mesfin Fekadu

Television

"Desus & Mero": Pals Desus Nice (Daniel Baker) and The Kid Mero (Joel Martinez) bring their comedic chemistry and a younger — sorry, network hosts! — perspective to late-night from their respective homes. Fans or the curious can tune in free with Showtime's 30-day, no-cost trial.

"The Iliza Shlesinger Sketch Show": Comedian-writer-actress Iliza Shlesinger ("Spenser Confidential") and an ensemble cast tear into pop culture and gender tropes in Netflix's six-part series, debuting Wednesday.

"Hawaii Five-0" finale: CBS is saying goodbye after 10 seasons and welcome back to Pauley Perrette, the network's onetime "NCIS" star. The two-hour series finale of "Hawaii Five-0," a reboot of the police drama born in 1968, will air April 5 on AFN-Prime. Perrette switches gears with the sitcom "Broke," debuting Thursday on CBS All Access, playing a single mom who takes in her sister (Natasha Leggero) and brother-in-law (Jaime Camil) after they fall on hard times.

If you're starting to run out of conversation at home, with yourself or others, the hosts of CBS' **"The Talk"** (daily, AFN-Spectrum) are back to help. Sharon Osbourne, Sheryl Underwood, Eve, Carrie Ann Inaba and Marie Osmond will practice social distancing on "The Talk@Home."

—Lynn Elber

John Prine is in stable condition, his wife says

John Prine is in stable condition after being placed on a ventilator while being treated for COVID-19-type symptoms, his wife, Fiona Whelan Prine, said Monday.

The singer-songwriter's family said Sunday that Prine was critically ill. Fiona Prine's message Monday on social media suggested his condition had improved overnight. Prine remains hospitalized.

"Please continue to send your amazing love and prayers," she said on Twitter. "Sing his songs. Stay home and wash hands. John loves you. I love you."

News that Prine's health was in jeopardy provoked an outpouring of affection for Prine. Joan Baez responded with a video of her playing his song "Hello In There" from her kitchen.

Fiona Prine earlier in March tested positive for coronavirus and said the couple was quarantined and isolated from each other. Fiona Prine, who is also Prine's manager, said Monday that she has recovered from COVID-19.

The 73-year-old Prine, one of the most influential singer-songwriters in folk and country music, has twice fought cancer.

Placido Domingo feels 'fine' after coronavirus

Tenor Placido Domingo said Monday he is resting at home after catching the new coronavirus.

Domingo said in a statement that he is "at home and I feel fine."

The 79-year-old was reportedly hospitalized in Mexico after publicly acknowledging on March 22 that he had tested positive for COVID-19 and said he was going into isolation. Domingo had suffered from a fever and a cough.

Domingo wrote on Monday that "from the very first symptom I was, as usual, under medical supervision, given my age and my comorbidity."

"My thoughts right now are with those who suffer and with all those who are generously working to save lives," he said. "I thank the medical staff for their affection and once again I recommend everyone to stay safe at home. See you soon."

Other news

■ The Yemeni-American poet Thera Almontaser has won the Walt Whitman Award for best first book. Almontaser's "The Wild Fox of Yemen" comes out in April 2021. As part of the award, the Academy of American Poets will purchase hundreds of copies of her book and distribute them to members.

■ Tomie dePaola, the prolific children's author and illustrator who delighted generations with tales of Strega Nona, the kindly and helpful old witch in Italy, died Monday at age 85. He was badly injured in a fall last week and died of complications following surgery. He worked on close to 250 books in a half century of publishing.

From wire reports

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Gun in waistband accidentally discharged

NH COLEBROOK — Police in New Hampshire said that they are investigating the unintentional discharge of a firearm by a man who was carrying an unholstered gun in his waistband.

State police said that Tyler Rancoces, 25, of Columbia, was brought to the hospital Sunday with injuries that were believed to be non-life-threatening. He was at a gathering with several others in Columbia when the gun went off.

Police said that they are investigating whether circumstances surrounding the unintentional discharge warrant criminal charges.

Suspect dies of medical emergency after pursuit

VA MARION — A Virginia sheriff's office said that a suspect died of an unspecified medical emergency after being taken into custody following a bizarre chase.

The Smyth County Sheriff's Office said in a news release that the case began when it received a call Saturday night about someone driving the wrong way on a road. Another emergency caller said that the driver had crashed through the utility gate of a business.

Deputies found the pickup truck, which then led investigators on a pursuit, according to the news release. Authorities said that during the pursuit, the suspect struck several police vehicles.

After an officer forced the truck off the road, the driver tried to set it on fire. The sheriff said officers forced their way into the vehicle and removed the combatative driver.

Once in custody, the man suffered a medical emergency, according to the news release. He was given CPR and taken to a hospital where he was pronounced dead. The news release doesn't define the medical emergency.

Arson charges filed in fire at school

ME GRAY — A man has been charged with setting fire to an elementary school in Maine, officials said Sunday. Robert MacKenzie, 22, was arrested and charged with arson Saturday.

MacKenzie is accused of setting a pile of leaves on fire in the entryway of Russell School, an elementary school in Gray, according to a spokesman for the state Department of Public Safety.

The fire reportedly damaged a table and a few other items in the entrance and released smoke throughout the school. There was minimal damage to the building.

Cemetery crash leading to possible drug charges

DE REHOBOTH BEACH — State troopers in Delaware arrested a man on drug charges after they said he drove into a cemetery and over



DAVID GOLDMAN/AP

Worshipping at a distance

The Rev. Peter Gower waves to worshippers as they leave the Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church parking lot Sunday in Johnston, R.I. Gower started to celebrate the Mass from the front door of the church as gatherings became restricted due to the coronavirus. Parishioners do not take communion, there is no collection plate passed, and they remain in their cars as they listen to the service over the radio.

headstones.

The Delaware State Police said in a news release that troopers responded to a single vehicle collision Saturday morning. The release said the driver ran a red light, crashed through a brick wall and drove over several headstones at the Midway Presbyterian Church cemetery in the Rehoboth Beach area. Witnesses told officers the suspect got out of the vehicle and fled on foot.

The suspect, a 32-year-old from Rehoboth Beach, was found nearby and taken into custody. Authorities said heroin and drug paraphernalia were found in his vehicle.

The man was arrested on charges including driving under the influence and drug possession.

More charges for man found with explosives

NY NIAGARA FALLS — A man in western New York who police said had nine explosive devices in his home is facing additional charges.

Jose M. Gandia, 47, of Niagara Falls, has been charged with unlawful possession of a destructive device and unlawful possession of a shortened shotgun, according to U.S. Attorney James P. Kennedy Jr. He faces a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison. Gandia is already facing other charges, including assaulting a police officer and menacing.

State police troopers responded to reports of a man pointing a shotgun with a red laser out of a pickup truck on the New York

THE CENSUS

\$2K

of the worldwide supply chain for Japanese food. The season would have started on March 22, but Maine Department of Marine Resources Commissioner Patrick Kellher said at the time that aspects of the fishery made it difficult to maintain social distancing and help prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

State Thruway Wednesday morning, police said. A trooper found the vehicle and tried to handcuff Gandia. Gandia got out of his car and tried to fight the trooper, authorities said.

Gandia was arrested, and police reportedly found several weapons and a pipe bomb in his car. Authorities also recovered nine "possible" destructive devices from inside Gandia's home, officials said.

Police: Sheriff showed up at standoff drunk

NM RIO RANCHO — The New Mexico Attorney General's Office is reviewing a case involving a sheriff who police said showed up drunk to a SWAT standoff and tried to order officers away.

Attorney General spokesman Matt Baca told The Associated Press late Friday that a complaint naming Rio Arriba County Sheriff James Lujan had been referred to the office and the prosecutors began reviewing it.

A criminal complaint filed Thursday said that Lujan, in plain

clothes, attempted to take over the scene involving a barricaded subject in Espanola, N.M., on Saturday. Espanola Police Chief Richard Jimenez wrote that officers reported Lujan smelled of alcohol and ignored commands to leave the "kill zone" in front of the house of the barricaded subject. Lujan told the Santa Fe New Mexican that the accusations in the criminal complaint are false.

Sea Turtle Center puts lessons for kids online

GA JEKYLL ISLAND — Georgia's hospital for sick and injured sea turtles is holding online lessons for children.

The Georgia Sea Turtle Center on Jekyll Island has been streaming live educational videos featuring insights from its turtle experts daily since March 19. The series aims to help children keep learning while schools are closed during the coronavirus pandemic.

Lessons so far have included segments on the different sea turtle species found in coastal Georgia

and a virtual field trip to the marshes of Jekyll Island.

Called "Scute School" after the name for the bony plates that form turtle shells, the series is being streamed on the Facebook pages of the Georgia Sea Turtle Center and Jekyll Island. New installments are scheduled through at least April 10.

Top court looks at small town speeding dispute

MI SARANAC — The state's highest court is taking a look at a speed limit dispute in a small town in western Michigan.

The Supreme Court said that it will hear arguments in the months ahead in the case of Anthony Owen, who was accused of drunken driving in Saranac in Ionia County.

A sheriff's deputy said that the stop was justified because Owen was speeding in a 25 mph zone. But Owen's lawyer argued that the speed limit was actually 55 mph by default because there was no sign on Parsonage Road.

The Michigan appeals court in 2019 ruled in favor of Owen and threw out evidence of drunken driving, saying that a "reasonably competent" officer should have known that Owen couldn't be stopped for speeding. But the Supreme Court last week said that it's wondering if the officer simply "made an objectively reasonable mistake of law."

From wire reports

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OPINION

Crisis reveals a long list of deficiencies

By CONOR SEN
Bloomberg Opinion

Crisis reveal underlying weaknesses in social and economic systems. Although disruptive, they provide opportunities to shore up those systems. The 2008-09 financial crisis revealed the banks, the financial system and the mortgage market, all of which now are more robust than they were. The coronavirus crisis similarly is revealing weaknesses in different areas of society. Part of our job in navigating our way through this crisis is to make them stronger, creating the foundation for a more resilient world in the future.

When thinking about a crisis, our focus should be on what underlying fragilities existed that allowed the crisis to happen in the first place. With the financial crisis, several weak points were exposed. Banks took on too much leverage to juice profits and shareholder returns. Thin capital buffers worked out well in booming markets because it meant banks were able to make greater profits on a lower equity base. Once the economy slumped, though, those capital buffers proved to be insufficient to absorb huge credit losses, putting the whole financial system and broader economy at risk.

The financial system was also put at risk because some traditional banking activities shifted from banks and regulated financial exchanges to nonbank entities with less oversight and little or no collateral behind them. In the housing market, mortgage boomed. When some of those bets went bad, because the collateral backing them largely didn't exist, financial firms weren't able to make good on their side of the bargain, leading to panic about whether any of these contracts could be relied upon.

In the housing market, mortgage underwriting standards were loosened too much. Lenders made loans without adequate verification of borrowers' ability to repay,

and borrowers took on more debt than they could afford on the assumption they would soon sell their homes for a profit. Many of the loans originated had interest rates that reset after a short period of time, making them unaffordable to the buyer. Many of these same loans were made with low or no down payment requirements. When the housing-market slump deepened and the Great Recession began, people lost their jobs, mortgages payments rose dramatically and because there was little or no equity in so many homes, soaring defaults and foreclosures saddled the nation's leading banks with huge losses.

Regulations and business practices were changed to at least partially address these issues in the wake of the crisis. Bank capital requirements increased, and large banks now have to pass annual stress tests before they can return capital to shareholders. As a result, banks are not rushing to the federal government for rescue packages. The Fed's new tools to provide relief are new. Regulations were put in place governing credit derivatives, curtailing their use. Mortgage-underwriting standards were tightened, contributing to the sluggish housing recovery during the past decade but also meaning that we're less likely to see housing market shocks like the system in this crisis in the same way as a decade ago.

Now the coronavirus crisis is revealing other weak points in our society. The U.S. health care system lacks the spare capacity to respond to a pandemic. Public-health agencies have no plan to begin their action after federal funding cuts. Too many households and small businesses lack an adequate savings cushion, making it difficult for them to withstand a prolonged economic shutdown. Some large nonfinancial industries deemed systemically important have immediate liquidity shortfalls after just a relatively brief shutdown. State and local governments with balanced-budget requirements don't have the resources to

fight a public-health crisis. Outsourcing supply chains to other countries can lead to shortages of essential goods.

In the acute phase of the crisis we find ourselves in there's not much time to do anything other than put out fires. But as things settle down we should work to address some of these fragilities. There may be nothing governments and companies can do to prevent the outbreak of viruses that have the potential to become pandemics, but with more robust systems in place they don't have to be as socially and economically disruptive.

It should also be a lesson that we shouldn't relax the regulations put into place after the financial crisis, something that some lawmakers have advocated. We've already seen a few cracks in the financial system in the early phase of this crisis, with the Federal Reserve having to backstop money-market funds — which were supposed to be shored up by the Dodd-Frank Act of 2010. The severely adverse scenario stress tests that banks have to pass before being allowed to return capital to shareholders — an 8.5% decline in real gross domestic product, a rise in the unemployment rate to 10% and a 5% decline in the stock market — may have seemed outlandish a month ago, but now it's one that could come to pass in the next several weeks. If the financial system and mortgage market had the same vulnerability in real gross domestic product, the current crisis would be even more disruptive than it already is.

We're in for some hard times for at least the next few months. But if anything positive can come out of this crisis, let it be making sure that the next time we confront a pandemic, we're better-prepared to weather it.

Conor Sen is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist. He is also a columnist for Newsweek. He lives in Atlanta and has been a contributor to The Atlantic and Business Insider. This column does not necessarily reflect the opinion of Bloomberg LP and its owners.

Give Americans the chance to buy 'war' bonds again

By HUGH HEWITT
Special to The Washington Post

Throughout World Wars I and II, civilians supported U.S. war efforts in a multitude of ways. From 1941 through 1945, Americans bought more than \$185 billion in war bonds. These bonds, like "victory gardens," were a way for citizens not on active duty to express their patriotism and contribute to the Allies' fight to defeat the Axis powers.

President Donald Trump's executive order, and correctly, described the coronavirus crisis as a war. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., and others across the political spectrum agree that the country is on something akin to a wartime footing. The battle against the threat from COVID-19 is not a partisan issue — or at least it should not be. So let's reexamine how war bonds contributed to our finest hours as a country and adapt that tool to this and future public health crises.

The question is not whether another health threat will materialize but when. We are in what planners call a "hundred-year event." That does not mean it will be a hundred years before another killer virus breaks out. A different virus threat could emerge, God forbid, tomorrow. We need to build excess capacity for such crises. That's where public health bonds come in.

I am told that Trump is very intrigued by the idea. If he gets behind "Beat the Bug" bonds — whatever the effort is dubbed — and Democrats join in, and they are joined by all the celebrities singing on

livestreams and all the athletes and talking heads commenting online, a vast bond campaign could be launched. Citizens want to help. In many ways, we need to contribute. When New Orleans Saints quarterback Drew Brees and his wife, Britany, pledged \$5 million to help impacted communities in Louisiana, the virtual cheering was loud and sustained. Not because everyone wants to be Brees (most people want to be Baker Mayfield, I think) but because everyone wants to help, though within their means.

Trump asked former presidents Barack Obama and Bill Clinton to lead the effort, for of course would, much as former presidents Bill Clinton and George H.W. Bush agreed to lead fundraising relief efforts after the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, or as Clinton and George W. Bush agreed to spearhead efforts in the aftermath of the 2001 terrorist attacks. Leading relief efforts is what former presidents do best. A health-bond campaign is an issue on which the talking heads on MSNBC, CNN and Fox News could actually agree.

Retired Adm. James Stavridis told me a story on air this past week about a letter framed in his home office that was written by a young boy to his father, the Army general who led the D-Day invasion was elected president. A young girl wrote to Eisenhower, the admiral told me, and asked what she should do with her \$25 in savings. "Shall I buy a bond, or shall I buy a bicycle?" Stavridis said that Eisenhower told her: Buy that bond. There's always time to buy a bicycle later on.

To what end would our treasury use the

proceeds from such bonds? Helping to pay for the trillions of dollars spent on emergency relief is an obvious answer, but so is building needed capacity for future crises. In the epilogue to his 2004 book, "The Great Influenza," John M. Barry predicted that efficiency pressures on health care systems would lead to a shortage of beds and critical reserves when a pandemic like the deadly influenza of 1918 to 1920 surfaced. No acute, widespread shortage has emerged yet in the coronavirus battle, but shortages exist in some places. That is no one's "fault." Excess capacity for pandemic preparation isn't a private-sector profit center, and it's low on the list of public needs until a crisis makes it critical.

So sell bonds and build capacity. Build hospitals that will be needed in the future. Assemble stockpiles of medical equipment. Stand up some pharmaceutical manufacturing capacity. Prepare not just for the potential mutation of this virus into a deadlier form — as happened with the 1918 flu, by the way — but also for the next pandemic.

Americans need to be part of the battle. Trump is right that we need to get back to work as soon as possible — his message isn't hard to understand, though it has been serially distorted online — but we also have to contribute as citizens. Public health bonds would help. Here's hoping that he moves to launch them and, if so, that everyone digs deep to buy them.

Hugh Hewitt, a Washington Post contributing columnist, hosts a nationally syndicated radio show and is author of "The Fourth Way: The Conservative Playbook for a Lasting GOP Majority."

OPINION

China fills leadership void as pandemic plays out

By DOYLE MCMANUS
Los Angeles Times

In the best of all pandemic-ridden worlds, the coronavirus would spur powerful countries to cooperate with one another since everyone is facing the same danger.

Not this time. The United States and China have turned the pandemic into a battle zone in their struggle for global influence. And so far, the United States is losing ground.

After bungling its initial response to the infections that first appeared in Wuhan, China appears to have largely contained the contagion and is delivering medical supplies to Italy, Spain and other hard-hit countries. Chinese President Xi Jinping spent last week on the phone offering well-publicized help to leaders around the world.

The White House bungled the U.S. response by failing to stockpile test kits and medical supplies, insisting that a travel ban with China would protect Americans. It didn't. After initially sending aid to Italy, federal officials are now frantically trying to buy masks and other critically needed gear from other countries to cover shortfalls at home.

Meanwhile, Beijing and Washington squabble over which country was to blame.

In China, officials initially tried to cover up the Wuhan outbreak and rebuffed U.S. and United Nations offers to send scientists to help study the virus. The Chinese Foreign Ministry spread disinformation theories unsupported by evidence, that visiting U.S. diplomats had introduced it.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo called his counterpart in Beijing to complain, and launched a broad attack on Xi's government.

The Chinese Communist Party poses a substantial threat to our health and way of life, as the Wuhan virus clearly has demonstrated," Xi told reporters, blasting Beijing for providing assistance to other



SZILARD KOSZTICSAN, MTI/AP

A worker disinfects the baggage container of a plane of Hungarian airline WizzAir after unloading boxes containing medical aid and protective materials sent from China to combat the coronavirus, at Liszt Ferenc International Airport in Budapest on Saturday.

countries and then "claiming that they are now the white hat."

Pompeo also created a needless diplomatic flap last week by demanding that the G7, of 7 democracies, blame the pandemic on the "Wuhan virus" in a communiqué intended to show global powers standing shoulder to shoulder during a global crisis.

The other G-7 countries refused and the joint statement was shelved. As a result, a once-powerful coalition led by the United States was visibly disunited.

President Donald Trump chairs the G-7 this year, but diplomats said he didn't convene a videoconference of its leaders until France's Emmanuel Macron repeatedly nudged him to.

That's not leadership.

The Kremlin is right about the facts. China is right to cover up the initial outbreak. Its Communist Party does lead a brutally authoritarian regime.

But he is ignoring our allies' needs. Eu-

ropean countries in the grips of the deadly pandemic want China's help. They don't want to score rhetorical points against Beijing; they need to stay on Xi's good side.

China's apparent recovery, coupled with the White House disarray, has given Xi an opportunity to win hearts and minds around the world. When people are sick, they don't care where the medicine comes from. Xi is simply doing what any normal big-power leader would do: working to expand his country's influence.

The problem isn't that China is acting more like a global leader. It's that the United States is acting less like one.

The State Department offered aid to more than two dozen countries, but it's been virtually invisible, both because this administration is preoccupied with the pandemic at home and because the rest of the world shows disdain for alliances and international organizations.

China's still recovering from its outbreak. Although its economy is the world's

second-largest, its military is far smaller than America's. It has fewer allies. It limits access to the internet, jails dissidents and recently expelled journalists from major U.S. news organizations.

And Beijing's aid offensive hasn't been error-free. There has been a backlash in parts of Europe against clumsy Chinese efforts to mix humanitarian aid with commercial deals, like the electronic giant Huawei's shipments of surgical masks to countries where it's seeking big contracts.

"I'd say both the U.S. and China are playing the soft-power game very poorly," Susan A. Thornton, a former State Department China expert, told me.

"Trying to use a disaster response to score political points is tricky," she said. "When thousands of people are dying, you'd better be in to be doing everything you can to save lives and cooperate, or you're not going to win any hearts and minds."

If the question is which political or economic model has been most effective in fighting the pandemic, the answer is neither China nor the United States. The places that have fared best so far are well-run democracies with sophisticated health care networks that did lots of early testing: South Korea, Taiwan, possibly Germany.

Like any other global cataclysm, the pandemic appears likely to change the balance of power — depending partly on which countries recover quickly.

So far, China appears to have increased its influence; how much isn't clear. It has made the United States look ineffective; how durably isn't clear.

It has made traditional institutions of international cooperation, like the U.N. and the G-7, look irrelevant as a medical catastrophe and economic carnage pose dangers to global stability.

That makes the most likely outcome a world in which nobody's a winner.

Doyle McManus is a Washington columnist for the Los Angeles Times and director of the journalism program at Georgetown University.

Russian facade of control over COVID-19 is cracking

By GARRY KASPAROV
Special to The Washington Post

With most of Europe and the United States shutting down to slow the coronavirus pandemic's advance, it was surprising in recent weeks to hear that Russia had apparently dodged COVID-19 almost entirely. Most of the outbreak drew a suspiciously tidy ring around the largest nation on Earth, as if Russian dictator Vladimir Putin had simply banned the virus like he has free speech and opposition candidates.

It seemed an unlikely miracle. Russia's risk factors include a health care system that is creaky at best outside of the affluent city centers; countless international travelers; a large migrant labor force; and a 2,600-mile border with China, where the virus originated. While COVID-19 was filling European hospitals, Russia was still filling soccer stadiums with fans and, in one case, the opening ceremony of a chess event in a theater with more than a thousand people.

Yet the official Kremlin line, parroted to varying degrees by every Russian news outlet, was that rapid testing and travel restrictions had turned the country into a citadel. Reports on Russia's success were also spread by the international media with only marginal skepticism — despite having spent the past three years

reporting on Moscow's ability to blanket the world with lies.

The Kremlin could fudge the coronavirus numbers, too, its response on state-run media and censor social media posts exposing a mounting crisis, but ultimately — just as China discovered — the government could not spin a relentless virus.

In the past few days, the Russian facade has begun to crack. Reports of overloaded hospitals are emerging. Moscow's mayor said the official numbers were wrong, and Putin made one of his ritual photo-ops at a hospital in full protective gear, finally acknowledging the crisis. (A lockdown order for the capital went into effect Monday, and will last for at least two weeks, city officials said.) If the Trump administration's example is anything to go by, months of ignoring and distorting reality will almost certainly make the consequences in Russia far worse.

It is remarkable that anyone ever took Russia's coronavirus numbers at face value. Like most dictatorships, Putin's regime lies constantly, even when it doesn't have to. Authoritarian regimes are obsessed with information control, especially when there is news that could make them look weak. No appearance of vulnerability can be permitted, otherwise the people might start getting dangerous ideas.

Then, too, Putin's track record in the specific realm of health and epidem-

ics. HIV officially barely exists in Russia, where it is still wrongly considered a "gay disease," and where the LGBTQ community is a persecuted minority. Activist groups trying to track HIV and educate about it are harassed and shut down. Unsurprisingly, Russia is one of the few places where HIV cases are increasing.

Putin's coronavirus malpractice isn't just the latest misery visited upon the Russian people; he also endangers the rest of the world. Remember the lessons of Chernobyl. The toxic nuclear cloud that the Soviet authorities pretended didn't exist until it was over Sweden did not stop at the Soviet border. The artificially low coronavirus numbers kept Russia off most flight ban and mandatory quarantine lists as the pandemic spread, with hundreds of flights going in and out of the country.

The human cost would be beside the point to Putin, who cares only about sending the message that he is strong and in control. If you think that description also applies to President Donald Trump's recent news conferences, you wouldn't be wrong. Trump's tendency to echo autocratic rhetoric is well-established, and the pandemic is no exception. Having wasted precious weeks minimizing the threat, Trump and his acolytes started (though then abandoned) a drumbeat about returning to "normal life" by Easter, April 12 — in a rhetorical campaign that demanded

the false and immoral choice between saving lives and restoring economic growth.

Trump's callousness about potential victims of the pandemic has been jarring, even by this president's standards. A crisis means difficult choices, impossible decisions that must still be made. But valuing every life — including the elderly, the weak, the vulnerable — is one of the signal traits that distinguish democracies from dictatorships.

Many of the core elements of democracy are already under pressure from the virus itself. Public gatherings, including some elections, have been suspended. Privacy is readily abandoned for tracking apps that can help control the spread. Even the social media platforms that routinely tolerate offensive speech and foreign propaganda have moved quickly to take down misinformation about COVID-19. Worthwhile measures in the short term could be used for bad ends in the wrong hands.

The pandemic will leave its mark, changing the world in ways big and small; we must unite to determine the kind of society we want to live in on the other side of it. While we battle to stop the virus from destroying our bodies, we must also hold dear to our souls. America will outlast the coronavirus despite Trump, and it doesn't have to become like him to do it.

Garry Kasparov is the chairman of the Renew Democracy Initiative.



MILITARY MATTERS



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Deals

Monday's transactions

FOOTBALL
National Football League
BALTIMORE RAVENS — Signed DE Derrick White to a one-year contract.
DALLAS COWBOYS — Signed K Greg Zuerlein, CB Maurice Canady and CB C.J. Goodwin.
DENVER BRONCOS — Re-signed OLB Jeremiah Attaochu to a one-year contract. Signed P Sam Martin to a three-year contract.
GREEN BAY PACKERS — Signed RT Rick Wagner and LB Christian Kirksey to two-year contracts. Re-signed DB Will Redmond and RB Tyler Ervin to one-year contracts.
INDIANAPOLIS COLTS — Signed CB T.J. Carrie to a one-year contract.
WASHINGTON REDSKINS — Signed TE Richard Rodgers and WR Cody Latimer.

HOCKEY
National Hockey League
ARIZONA COYOTES — Signed F Michael Latta to a one-year contract.
LOS ANGELES KINGS — Signed F Tyler Madden to a three-year contract.

Pro soccer

MLS glance										
EASTERN CONFERENCE										
	W	L	T	PTS	GF	GA		W	L	T
Atlanta	2	0	0	6	4	2		2	0	0
Montreal	1	0	1	3	4	3		1	0	1
New York	1	0	1	3	4	3		1	0	1
Toronto FC	1	0	1	3	4	3		1	0	1
Columbus	1	0	1	3	4	3		1	0	1
D.C. United	0	1	1	0	3	3		0	1	1
Orlando	0	1	1	0	3	3		0	1	1
New England	0	1	1	0	3	3		0	1	1
Philadelphia	0	1	1	0	3	3		0	1	1
Cincinnati	0	2	0	0	0	2		0	2	0
Inter Miami CF	0	2	0	0	0	2		0	2	0
New York City FC	0	2	0	0	0	2		0	2	0
WESTERN CONFERENCE										
	W	L	T	PTS	GF	GA		W	L	T
Sporting KC	2	0	0	6	7	1		2	0	0
LA Galaxy	2	0	0	6	7	1		2	0	0
Colorado	2	0	0	6	4	2		2	0	0
FC Dallas	1	0	1	3	4	3		1	0	1
Los Angeles FC	1	0	1	3	4	3		1	0	1
Seattle	1	0	1	3	4	3		1	0	1
Portland	1	0	1	3	4	3		1	0	1
Vancouver	1	0	1	3	4	3		1	0	1
Rangers	0	1	1	0	1	2		0	1	1
Salt Lake	0	1	1	0	1	2		0	1	1
LA Galaxy	0	1	1	0	1	2		0	1	1
San Jose	0	1	1	0	1	2		0	1	1
Nashville SC	0	2	0	0	1	3		0	2	0

Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.

All games postponed until May 10.

Pro basketball

NBA glance										
Eastern Conference										
	W	L	PTS	GB		W	L	PTS	GB	
Toronto	46	18	619	—		46	18	619	—	
Boston	43	21	672	3		43	21	672	3	
Philadelphia	39	26	600	7½		39	26	600	7½	
Brooklyn	34	34	469	16		34	34	469	16	
New York	31	46	318	26		31	46	318	26	
Southeast Division										
Miami	31	31	631	—		31	31	631	—	
Orlando	30	35	462	11		30	35	462	11	
Washington	23	42	375	16½		23	42	375	16½	
Charlotte	24	42	354	18		24	42	354	18	
Atlanta	20	47	299	22		20	47	299	22	
Central Division										
Memphis	52	12	815	—		52	12	815	—	
Chicago	49	15	600	14		49	15	600	14	
Illinois	23	43	338	31		23	43	338	31	
Minnesota	20	46	303	33½		20	46	303	33½	
Cleveland	15	46	292	34		15	46	292	34	
Western Conference										
Southwest Division										
Houston	49	14	824	—		49	14	824	—	
Oklahoma City	40	24	625	2½		40	24	625	2½	
Memphis	32	33	492	8½		32	33	492	8½	
San Antonio	28	36	438	12		28	36	438	12	
Portland	27	36	429	12½		27	36	429	12½	
Northwest Division										
Denver	42	22	662	—		42	22	662	—	
Utah	41	23	641	1½		41	23	641	1½	
Oklahoma City	40	24	625	2½		40	24	625	2½	
Portland	29	37	439	14½		29	37	439	14½	
Minnesota	25	42	295	23½		25	42	295	23½	
Pacific Division										
L.A. Lakers	49	14	778	—		49	14	778	—	
Golden State	48	15	768	1		48	15	768	1	
Sacramento	28	36	438	21½		28	36	438	21½	
Phoenix	26	39	404	24		26	39	404	24	
San Diego	15	50	231	35		15	50	231	35	

All games postponed at least until mid-May.

Red Sox's Sale has surgery on elbow

By JIMMY GOLEN
Associated Press

BOSTON — Red Sox starter Chris Sale had Tommy John surgery on his left elbow on Monday, his 31st birthday, waiting 11 days after doctors said he needed the operation because of difficulty in scheduling during the coronavirus pandemic.

Red Sox chief baseball officer Chaim Bloom said the team worked with doctors to make sure the procedure didn't burden an already-stressed healthcare system.

"Under normal circumstances we might have been able to have it happen a little bit sooner," Bloom said on a conference call with reporters. "We know that this is not life and death. ... It's apples and oranges with this versus when you talk about something that's life-threatening."

Dr. Neal ElAttrache replaced Sale's ulnar collateral ligament at the Kerlan-Jobe Institute in Los Angeles; the Red Sox said the surgery was a success. Sale is expected to miss 14-15 months, which would bring him back in the middle of the 2021 season.

"We look forward to his return sometime next year," Bloom said. Also Monday, Red Sox general manager Brian O'Halloran said that the team will wait until next week to consider whether to reopen its facility in Fort Myers, Fla., where a minor league tested positive for COVID-19 on March 24.

"The reports that we are getting is that he is fine," O'Halloran said. "There have been no other positive tests."

Salé missed the start of spring training with an illness the team described as a flu that morphed into pneumonia. The Red Sox then said he had a flexor strain near the elbow, but the team hoped he would avoid ligament replacement surgery.

Scoreboard

MLB calendar

TBA — Opening day, active rosters reduced to 26 players.
July 3-4 — Owners meeting, New York.
July 14 — All-Star Game at Los Angeles.
July 26 — Hall of Fame induction, Cooperstown, N.Y.
July 31 — Last day during the season to trade a player.

This Date in Baseball

April 1
1972 — The first collective players strike in major league baseball began. The strike lasted 12 days and canceled 86 games.
2011 — Bryce Harper homered in his first two at-bats, Stephen Strasburg retired 19 batters in a row and the defending NL East champion Washington Nationals opened the season with a 2-0 victory over the Miami Marlins. Harper, the reigning NL Rookie of the Year, hit solo shots over the out-of-town scoreboard in right-center field off Ricky Nolasco in the first and fourth innings.



OCTAVIO JONES/Tampa Bay Times

Toronto Blue Jays minor league player Steward Berroa, center, prepares to fly home along with his teammates from the Dominican Republic at Tampa International Airport in Tampa, Fla., on March 15.

Support for minor leaguers extended

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Major League Baseball is extending its financial support to minor league players through May while suspending their contracts because of the new coronavirus pandemic.

MLB announced March 19 that it was giving minor leaguers \$400 weekly allowances through April 8, the day before the minor league season was scheduled to start. The commissioner's office said Tuesday that minor leaguers will continue to receive those allowances and health benefits through May 31 or the minor league opening day, whichever comes first.

Minor league contracts have a provision allowing them to be suspended "during any national emergency," MLB said Tuesday it

had told the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues, the minor league governing body, that it was unable to supply players to minor league affiliates because of the emergency.

Major and minor league seasons are on hold due to the new coronavirus. Weekly minimum salaries on full-season minor league teams range from \$290 at Class A to \$502 at Triple-A over the five-month season, meaning many players are making more during this hiatus than they do in-season.

The allowances are meant to help players cover costs for housing, food and training. Most players were instructed to leave their spring training complexes just over two weeks ago, sending them scrambling to make ends meet because they hadn't received a pay-

check from teams since the end of the 2019 season. Exceptions were made for players from Venezuela and other high-risk areas, many of whom remained at the spring camps.

MLB reached an agreement last week with the Major League Baseball Players Association, which covers players in the minors who have big-league contracts. The teams are providing \$170 million in advance salaries to that group.

MLB's minor league initiative also does not cover players on the restricted, voluntary retired, disqualified or ineligible lists; and those already receiving housing or food from teams. In addition, each team will make arrangements for players on Dominican Summer League rosters.

Safety: 'Crazy, challenging' season is ahead

FROM BACK PAGE

No one knows when baseball and other suspended sports will resume, because no one knows when life might return to normal in the aftermath of the COVID-19 outbreak. More than 800,000 people around the world have become infected and over 39,000 have died, according to a running count kept by Johns Hopkins University, counts that include more than 164,000 infections and more than 3,100 deaths in the U.S.

Spring training was halted on March 12; opening day was supposed to be last week and won't happen any earlier than mid-May.
"At this point, it's hard to say what can or should be done. MLB is exhausting all of (its) brainpower and manpower, along with the 30 clubs, to come up with some ideas and what's the best way to play a regular season in

as many games as possible and get to a playoff scenario," said Washington Nationals general manager Mike Rizzo, whose team has turned over the grounds of its spring facility to public testing for the coronavirus.

"As the commissioner said, we're going to need to get creative," Rizzo added. "But beyond that, we're just speculating on all of these things."

MLB and its players are hoping to complete initial discussions on scheduling by April 10, and among the proposals under consideration: pushing back the end of the season, even if it involves using neutral sites and domes to avoid colder weather in many cities; increasing doubleheaders to get more games in per week than usual; playing games without spectators; changing the postseason format.

"We've been told," said Tail-

lon, a union rep, "there's no such thing as a bad idea right now."

Texas Rangers shortstop Elvis Andrus, also a union rep, described a recent call about scheduling options with other players this way: "We were basically talking about potential scenarios and how crazy this season will be, how challenging it will be."

Barnhart, for one, is realistic about what is going to drive the ultimate decisions about what a season might look like.

"It goes without saying that, as players, we want to play as many games (as possible), not only because we love playing, but also we want to make as much money as possible. That's the God's honest truth about it," he said. "And the same goes with ownership and all of that. So everybody wants to make money."

AP Sports Writers Will Graves, Stephen Hawkins and Joe Kay contributed to this report.

COLLEGE

NCAA gives spring athletes an extra year of eligibility

By RALPH D. RUSSO
Associated Press

The NCAA will permit Division I spring-sport athletes — such as baseball, softball and lacrosse players — who had their seasons shortened by the coronavirus pandemic to have an additional year of eligibility.

The NCAA Division I Council voted Monday to give spring-sport athletes regardless of their year in school a way to get back the season they lost, but it did not guarantee financial aid to current seniors if they return to play next year.

Winter sports, such as basketball and hockey, were not included in the decision because many athletes in those sports had completed all or most of their regular seasons, the council decided.

The council is made up of college sports administrators representing all 32 D-I conferences, plus two members of the student-athlete advisory committee. Earlier in the day, 60 SAAC members released a letter calling for the council to provide the extra eligibility to all athletes whose seasons were impacted by the COVID-19 related shutdown.

Voting is weighted to give the Power Five conferences more say. Chairwoman Grace Calhoun, who is Penn's athletic director, declined to reveal the final vote.

"At the end we really did coalesce around all of the decisions that we made today," Calhoun said. "They were strongly supported."

How much scholarship money will be made available to each athlete whose college career would have ended this spring will be determined by the athlete's school.

The added scholarships could cost a school hundreds of thousands of dollars more than it would usually spend on spring-sport athletes. The extra expenses come at a time when athletic departments could be facing cutbacks. The pandemic forced the cancellation of the NCAA men's basketball tournament, which cut the association's distribution to members by \$375 million this year.

"We had long discussions around the fact that this does not avoid substantially difficult circumstances, but what we felt was important was to localize that decision-making and to ensure that we were as permissive as possible," Calhoun said. "At the end of the day, each institution is going to have to figure out what it can do."

Schools will be able to use the NCAA's Student Assistance Fund to pay for scholarships for stu-

dents who take advantage of the additional eligibility in 2020-21.

Roster and scholarship limits for teams will be adjusted next season to fit returning seniors and incoming freshman. Similar changes have already been approved in Division II.

Nebraska-Omaha softball player Hailey Bartz was planning to graduate in December and move on from school. Now she's not so sure.

"I've been speaking with my family about it and trying to figure out pros and cons. Do I want to take advantage of that year? Do I not?" Bartz said. "Some of my teammates have their schooling set up, full-time jobs. You have your life planned out and then this kind of pushes everything back another year. At the same time it's really hard to pass up because

it's a game of love."

'This has a four- or five-year effect depending on how you want to count it.'

Bill Scholl
Marquette AD

athlete who competed while eligible in the spring season shortened by COVID-19 in 2020. After the 2021 spring season, scholarship and roster limits will apply to athletes granted the waiver.

"This has a four- or five-year effect depending on how you want to count it," said Marquette athletic director Bill Scholl, whose school fields track, lacrosse, tennis and golf teams in the spring. "So the roster management piece is just something our coaches, we're going to have to figure out and work our way through."

Calhoun said the council did not consider the possibility of the fall sports season, including football, being interrupted. Football generates billions of dollars, especially for Power Five conferences. Losing that would be potentially devastating to schools that play major college football.

"There was an acknowledgment that we don't know the future and if other seasons are canceled (or) other things happen in the future we'll have to take that up with the individual merits of the case at time," Calhoun said.

Associated Press writers Eric Olson in Omaha, Nebraska, and Steve Megargee in Milwaukee contributed to this report.



PHOTOS BY WILFREDO LEE (ABOVE) AND JOHN MINCHILLO (BELOW)/AP

Miami's Manny Diaz, above, is trying to put in a new offense under coordinator Rhett Lashlee and a new quarterback in Houston transfer D'Eriq King despite not having a full spring practice. Other coaches, with veteran players, such as Cincinnati's Luke Fickell, below, should be less impacted by the loss of spring football practice.

Football coaches try to fill void without spring practice

By RALPH D. RUSSO
Associated Press

Since taking over as Florida State coach in December, Mike Norvell has spent seemingly endless hours laying the foundation of his program.

Winter is time for coaches to deliver a consistent message, build the culture they want and get players to buy into a way of going about their business whether they are in the weight room, a meeting room or classroom.

Norvell has seen plenty of positive signs. Spring practice is the first opportunity to see how it translates to the field. The Seminoles got in three practices before the coronavirus outbreak shut down college sports and upended nearly everything else.

"You spend so much time teaching them why we do things. And you're hopeful to get the chance to show them some of the payoff of that through spring practice," Norvell said.

Normally, college football teams all over the country would be preparing for the upcoming season. Installing new schemes. Working on fundamentals. Developing less experienced players and expanding the skills of veterans. Building a cohesive team, players and coaches connecting.

That's gone now and coaches are trying to figure out how to recreate some of what has been lost.

"Your football team is under construction," Notre Dame coach Brian Kelly said. "A new group of players that require time. Those hours mean a lot. You begin to develop the DNA of your football team."

Kelly said his top concern was



pushed back activities until May 31.

Coaches are hopeful some of the time they have lost in the spring might be given back in the summer, either through minicamps or earlier starts to preseason practices. But there is so much uncertainty the old coaching cliché of taking things one day at a time has never been more relevant.

Luke Fickell is entering his fourth season at Cincinnati with an established core of experienced players. He said his goal is to give the players a routine. The American Athletic Conference has canceled athletic activities for the rest of the school year.

The Bearcats will be getting workout regimens they can do on their own without access to local gyms. Fickell plans to organize online meetings with position groups and assistant coaches.

"Don't know how much they're going to get out of the meetings. Don't know how much they're going to get out of the workouts," Fickell said. "We just have to create some type structure."

Fickell said he is not overly concerned about his veteran players. Sometimes keeping those guys engaged and motivated in spring practice is a challenge. For younger players, especially at a developmental program like Cincinnati, losing spring practice is a huge setback.

"They're going to lose half a year of development," he said.

Norvell said he planned to send his players a five-minute video of himself, twice a week. Having them hear his voice and see his face is more about building trust than teaching football.

"There's a lot of uncertainty with everyone," Norvell said.

making sure players stay on top of their now online academics. Notre Dame normally offers no online classes.

"We're all academic advisers," Kelly said of his staff.

Miami coach Manny Diaz doesn't have Kelly's luxuries. The Hurricanes have a new offense under coordinator Rhett Lashlee and a new quarterback in Houston transfer D'Eriq King.

"You can really hone in on the techniques, fundamentals (during spring practice)," Diaz said. "That's the time the players are introduced to the new scheme and then they get a chance in the summer to grasp it on their own before we get back together again for training camp in August."

Spring practice across major college football is typically done by the end of April. The Atlantic Coast Conference and the Southeastern Conference have canceled all athletic-related activities through the academic year. The Big 10 has pushed back "all organized team activities until May 4 while the Big 12 and Pac-12 have

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

TOP 10
ALL-TIME

With no March Madness, The Associated Press is moving stories and historical pieces to help fill some of the void in college basketball. A panel of AP sports writers voted in March on the top 10 men's basketball games in the history of the NCAA Tournament. They are being republished because the sport has been shut down by the coronavirus pandemic. The following game story, from April 7, 2008, was voted No. 6.

No. 6

Rock chalk, Jayhawk nice shot

Chalmers' trey in 2008 final forced overtime, was highlight of Kansas' rally over Memphis

BY EDDIE PELLIS
Associated Press

MARIO CHALMERS, meet Lorenzo Charles and Keith Smart. The Kansas guard made one of the biggest shots in NCAA history Monday night, a three-pointer with 2.1 seconds left to force overtime and lead the Jayhawks to the national championship with a 75-68 victory over Memphis.

Chalmers' shot was the most tremendous moment of a tremendous game that saw the Tigers squander a nine-point lead over the final 2:12. Derrick Rose and Chris Douglas-Roberts missed four of five free throws over the final 72 seconds to set the table for Chalmers, a junior from Anchorage, Alaska, who is suddenly a household name.

"Probably the biggest shot ever made in Kansas history," Kansas coach Bill Self said.

"That has to be one of the biggest shots in basketball history," teammate Rodrigue Stewart said.

The win gave the Jayhawks their first title since 1988, when "Danny (Manning) and the Miracles" pulled an upset over Oklahoma.

Chalmers' shot came almost 25 years to the date after Charles became famous with his stick-back of Derek Whittenburg's air ball to give North Carolina State a title — the one that sent Jim Valvano scurrying around the court looking for someone to hug. Smart's baseline jumper with a second left gave Indiana a one-point victory over Syracuse in 1987.

Chalmers was every bit as clutch, while Memphis was the exact opposite. The ending made a mockery of Tigers coach John Calipari's theory that his players, among the country's worst with 59% free-throw shooting, would always come through when the stakes were highest.

"Ten seconds to go, we're thinking we're national champs, all of a sudden a kid makes a shot, and we're not," Calipari said.

Hustling the ball down the court with 10.8 seconds left, no timeouts and trailing by three, Sherron Collins handed off to Chalmers at the top of the three-point line, and Chalmers took the shot. It hit nothing but net and tied the score at 63.

Robert Dozier missed a desperation heave at the buzzer, and Rose went limping to the bench, favoring his right leg.

Brandon Rush, Darrell Arthur and Darnell Jackson scored the first six points of overtime to put Kansas ahead 69-63. Memphis, clearly exhausted, didn't pull any closer than three the rest of the way.

Rose played all 45 minutes in what could very well be his last college game.

"Overtime, they kind of beat us down," Calipari said. "I didn't suit a whole lot, because I was trying to win the game at the end."

Although Chalmers will go down in history, Rose was setting himself up to be the star of the game, the next 'King' in Memphis. He took over in the second half, scoring 14 of his team's 16 points during one stretch to lift the Tigers (38-2) to a 60-51 lead with 2:12 left.



ERIC GAY/AP

Memphis guard Derrick Rose, right, covers his face in front of Kansas' Sherron Collins and Mario Chalmers late in overtime in his team's loss in the 2008 national championship. Rose led Memphis with 18 points, but missed a key free throw at the end of regulation.



PHOTOS BY MARK HUMPHREY (ABOVE) AND ERIC GAY (BELOW)/AP

Above: Kansas guard Mario Chalmers shoots a three-pointer to take the game into overtime in his team's 75-68 victory over Memphis in the 2008 national championship game in San Antonio. Below: Chalmers, now a pro player in Greece, celebrates after hitting the shot.

But the Jayhawks (37-3) used the strategy any smart opponents of Memphis' would, fouling the heck out of one of the country's worst free-throw-shooting teams and when Rose and Douglas-Roberts started putting up bricks, KU had its opening.

"Being a leader of this team, I feel I let them down by missing them," Douglas-Roberts said. "I told them that I take the blame."

Everyone on Kansas deserves some credit. Arthur was dominant inside, finishing with 20 points and 10 rebounds, lots on dunks and easy layups off job passes. Chalmers finished with 18 points. Rush had 12 and Collins had 11 points, six assists and did a wonderful job handling Rose for the first 28 minutes.

Rose wound up with 18 points in a game that showed how ready he is for the NBA. He was 3-for-4 from the line, however, and that one miss with 10.8 seconds left is what most certainly would have sealed the game and given the Tigers their first title.

"It wasn't really the free throws," Rose said. "If we'd done things before the free throws, we would've been in good shape."

Instead, the title goes back to



Lawrence for the third time in the fabled program's history.

The inventor of the game, James Naismith, was the first Jayhawks coach. It's the school that made household names of Wilt Chamberlain, Manning and yes, even North Carolina's Roy Williams, the coach who famously left the Jayhawks, lost to them in the semifinals, but was in the

Kansas cheering section Monday wearing a Jayhawks sticker.

This game was a well-needed reprieve from a more-or-less blah tournament in which many games were blowouts and fever — Kansas' two-point win over Davidson in the regional finals was one exception — were memorable.

"Being up seven, being down nine, being up two, down five, going to overtime," Kansas center Cole Aldrich said. "We fought it out, and it's surreal. It's nuts."

Rose went crazy during Memphis' second-half run. A three-point header here, a scooping layup for a three-point play next. Then, the capper, an off-balance, 18-foot shot off glass with the shot-clock buzzer sounding. Officials at first credited Rose with a three, but went to the replay monitor and saw he was clearly inside the line. Even with the point deducted, Memphis had a 56-49 lead and all the momentum. Most teams would have been demoralized.

Clearly, Kansas is not most teams.

"I just thought, 'you know, we can do this, we can do this, and we just need to catch a break,'" Self said. "And we caught a break."

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MLB

Safety squeeze



ROSS D. FRANKLIN/AP

Cincinnati Reds catcher Tucker Barnhart is pictured during a spring training game against the Oakland Athletics on Feb. 28 in Goodyear, Ariz. Barnhart, a union representative, expressed concern during a conference call Monday that schedule adjustments could lead to injuries.

As baseball ponders post-coronavirus season, players worry about health

By HOWARD FENDRICH
Associated Press

As Major League Baseball and the players' union contemplate ways to create a schedule for whenever the coronavirus pandemic subsides, Cincinnati Reds catcher Tucker Barnhart raised a concern that is surely shared by others around the sport: Could trying to cram in games, and maybe extend the season into late November or December, lead to injuries?

"The player safety piece is a big thing," Barnhart, a union representative, said Monday during a conference call with

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reporters.

That involves how many off-days are salvaged in 2020, how many times teams are told to play in any given week and how 2021 could be affected if there is a shorter-than-usual off-season.

"Moving forward, I don't think you can do things that are going to compromise the integrity of next season, as well. What I mean by that is forcing the issue of getting

so many games in that you risk injury, and you risk major injury to players, because you are trying to get in as many games as you can," Barnhart said.

"This is all assumptions and thoughts from me specifically — it's not from the union — but you're going to have to protect us as players," he continued. "And if you can't do that, I think that would be where I personally would kind of draw the line."

That's also top of mind for Pittsburgh Pirates pitcher Jameson Taillon, who already has been ruled out for 2020 while recovering from a second reconstructive surgery on his right elbow. He's brought up the idea of trying to return if the season goes into November, but said that's been "shut down pretty quickly."

Speaking more generally about the effect an altered season could have on guys around the majors, Taillon said: "This is a unique situation. We're going to have to be careful health-wise."

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TO OUR READERS

As the sports world pauses to join the rest of the world in fighting the coronavirus pandemic, you will see fewer sports stories in Stars and Stripes. We look forward to resuming our normal coverage when the leagues and governing bodies determine it is safe for athletes and fans to return to competition.

